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electronic GAMES

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OCTOBER, 1984

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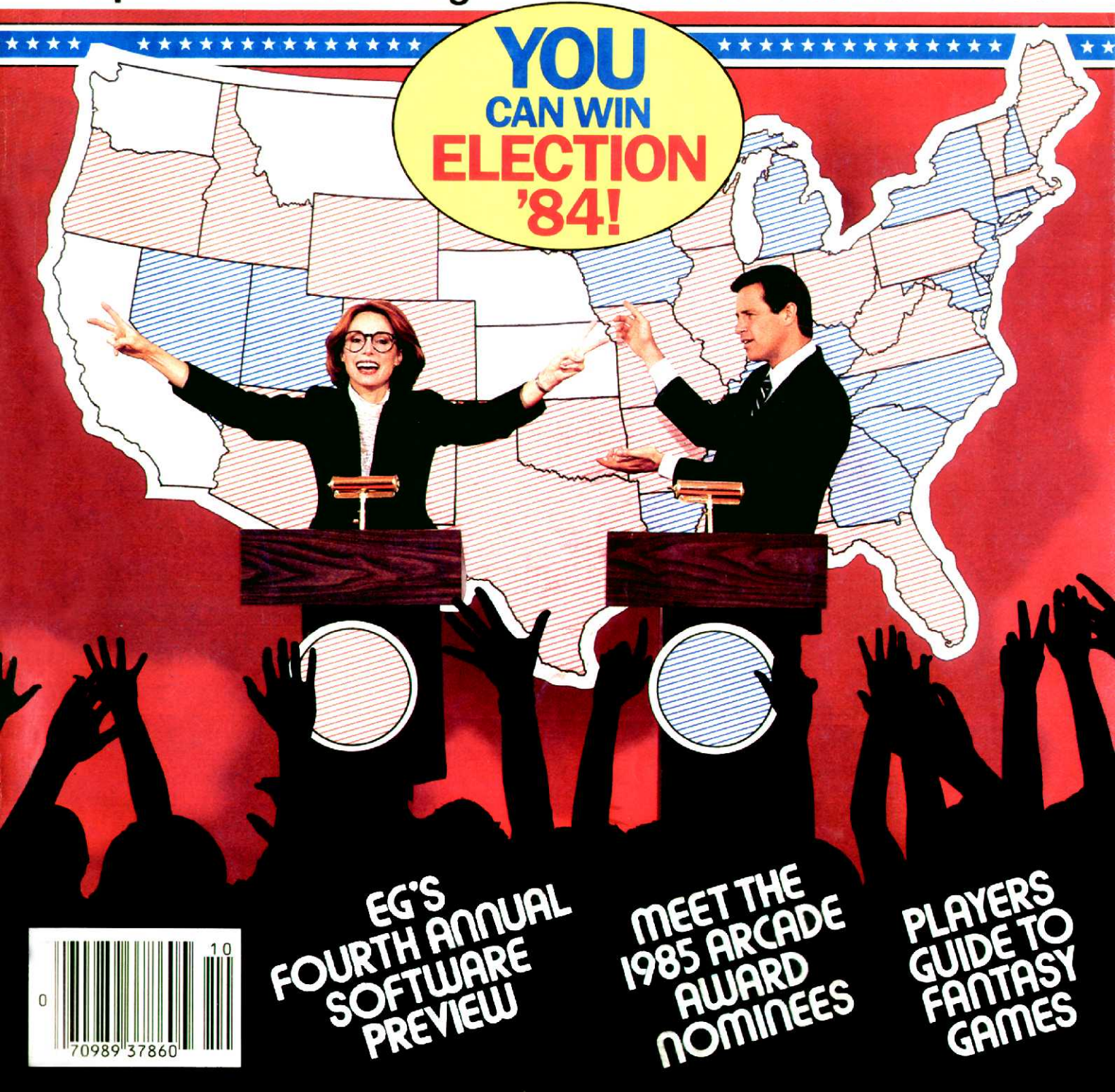

EG'S FOURTH ANNUAL SOFTWARE PREVIEW

MEET THE 1985 ARCADE AWARD NOMINEES

PLAYERS GUIDE TO FANTASY GAMES

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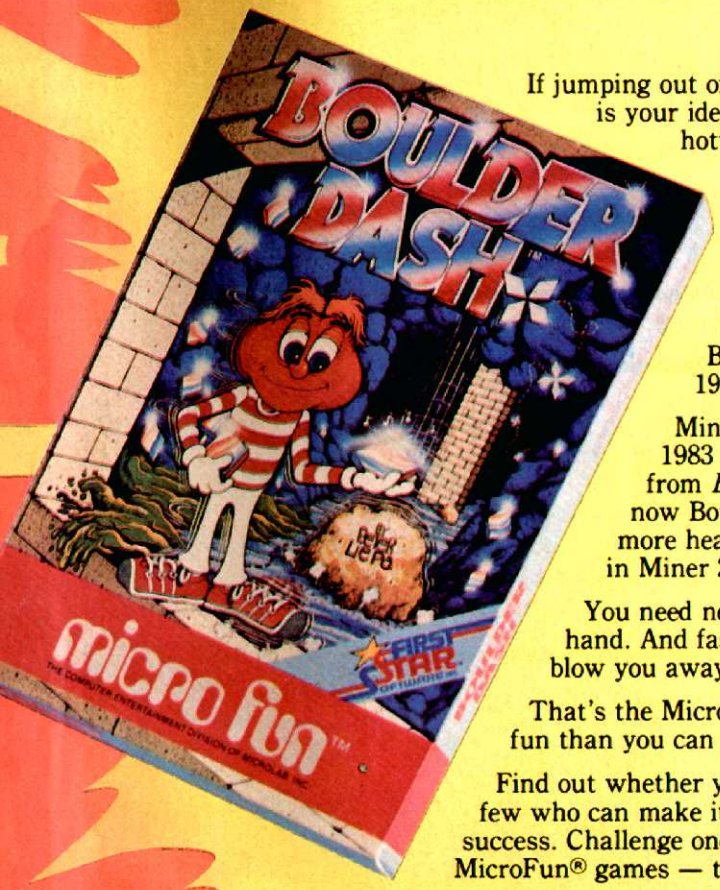

If jumping out of the frying pan into the fire is your idea of fun, MicroFun® has some of the hottest challenges to your skill.

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Find out whether you are one of the chosen few who can make it to the highest levels of success. Challenge one of the popular new MicroFun® games — today.

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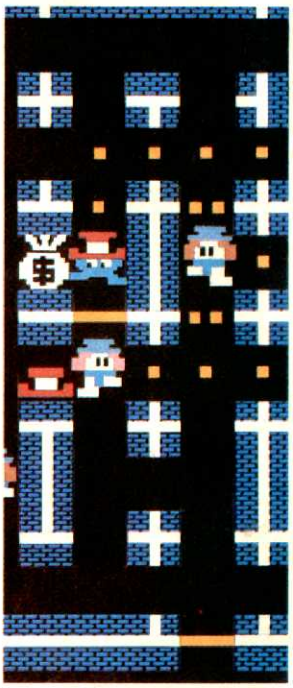

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NEW FROGGER II THREEEDEEP!™

VIDEO & HOME COMPUTER GAME

BEYOND THE POND

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the pond, here comes the new Frogger II ThreeeDeep!™

You'll need eyes in the back of your head, and on either side too, as you find yourself hopping in and out of three new, dangerous, and different worlds that go far beyond the pond of the original Frogger.

You'll have to think ahead to survive Underwater, On The Surface, and In The Sky.

You've got to be quick to evade deadly, sneaky eels and fight strong currents underwater. And just when you think you've avoided the hippos' shake on the surface, you have to watch out for a persistent killer shark. Or you're gone.

And if you don't bounce high enough in the sky, a flying dragon named Clyde will zap you. Are you up to the challenge? Find out. New Frogger II ThreeeDeep!

Get hopping on it.

TREACHERY UNDERWATER*.

VILLAINY ON THE SURFACE.

EVIL HI-JINKS IN THE SKY.

Available for Atari® Home Computers, 2600™, 5200™, ColecoVision™ and Commodore 64™ Systems.

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The Story Behind the Cover

By ARNIE KATZ

The story behind this issue's cover is more complicated than usual. For one thing, it's a lot different than any we've used in the past. There isn't a spaceship, dragon or deathray in sight! Instead, it shows an election scene inspired by a pair of popular electronic games, **President Elect** (Strategic Simulations) and **Campaign '84** (Sunrise).

This cover — and those you'll be seeing in coming months — symbolizes what we believe is the single most important trend in electronic gaming today.

The Computer Gaming Age has superceeded the Videogaming Era, and this change has fundamentally altered the nature of home arcading. The action games

which have dominated videogaming are still with us, but programs which challenge the player's mental as well as physical abilities are attracting a big audience. Strategy contests and adventures now account for more than half of all computer game software sales.

The larger memory and heightened graphic capability possessed by present day computers make possible much more detailed and sophisticated simulations. Freed from the traditional constraints, designers are embracing novel and varied themes never before seen on the electronic gaming screen. Nowadays, when you boot up a disk, you can have the vicarious experience of solving a murder mystery, running for elective office, exploring unknown lands, boogying on down with some breakdance moves or administering justice as a sentencing judge — or just about any other activity or situation you can imagine.

So EG will attempt to embody this new spirit of electronic gaming in a series of photographic covers. We hope the magazine's loyal band of readers enjoy the "live your game" covers. And don't worry, SF lovers, the outer space battles and swordfights-to-the-death will return to our covers in due course.

And before I forget: Welcome to the return of the monthly ELECTRONIC GAMES!

Volume Two, Number Fifteen
October, 1984

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Mr. Do!'s™ Castle

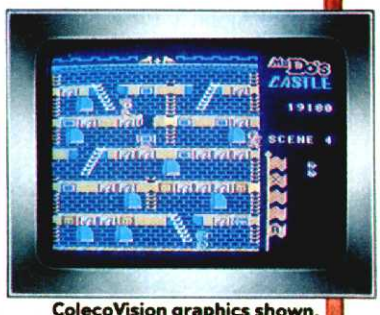
Video & Home Computer Game

THERE'S NOT A SECOND TO CLOWN AROUND!

It's do! Or doom! For Mr. Do! The wacky, hammer-slappy clown under siege in Mr. Do!'s Castle™ home video game.

Mr. Do! is back from the arcade. And now he's in his castle about to become a fast food lunch for voraciously clever unicorns. Doing them in or escaping takes all the split-second ingenuity Mr. Do!'s got. Like when to use his trusty hammer or his fast little feet.

Can he do it? It'll take all you can do to help him! But hurry, you haven't got a second to lose.



ColecoVision graphics shown.

Available for Atari® Home Computers, 2600™, 5200™, ColecoVision™ and Commodore 64™ Systems.

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HOTLINE

Konami's *Track and Field* competition: winner John Britt (left) and Mike Mallory.

TRACK & FIELD CHALLENGE BENEFITS MARCH OF DIMES

Konami/Centuri's **Track & Field** was the star in a videogame competition that netted over $100,000 in support for the March of Dimes Telethon Against Birth Defects (June 30-July 1). Sponsors for the transoceanic contest were Bally's Aladdin's Castle, Inc., National Convenience Stores, Inc., and Centuri, Inc.

Qualifications were held during May in Shop 'N Go, Stop 'N Go, Hot Stop and Colonial Convenience Stores and at all Bally's Aladdin's Castles and Family Fun Centers. Fourteen top scorers, from 14 regions of the USA, went to Houston for the Grand National Finals May 26, to compete in head-to-head competition for the U.S. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals. These three finalists were then treated to expense-paid trips to Tokyo to represent the USA against three medal winners from Japan.

The world-class Gold Medalist was John Britt, Riverside, Ca., and the champion Silver Medal went to Mike Mallory, Dayton, Ohio. All finalists won an Atari 5200 game system, *Track & Field* jogging suit and duffle bag. Medalists won prizes which included an AMC Jeep, Atari 800XL computers, pool tables, luggage, coin-op machines, and other awards.

Track & Field features six coin-op events: a 100-meter dash, long jump, 110-meter hurdles, javelin and hammer throws, and high jump.

MICROLAB HOST TO COMPUTER STUDENTS

MicroLab invited 15 Chicago computer students to their own offices for an end-of-term seminar from May 5 through June 9. Students were provided transportation from the inner city to the company's Highland Park headquarters. There they were assigned Apple II computers and received special instructions, help and hints from Microlab's programmers. "Offering such a class is an opportunity for us to give back to the community what we have earned," explained MicroLab's prexy Stan Goldberg. He went on to say that he hoped the program might spark other firms to offer projects in their own towns.

KOHL, FORMAN GET POSTS AT EG

Louise Kohl has joined the staff of ELECTRONIC GAMES as managing editor. Louise's excellent experience and command of key editorial skills will aid her in assuming overall responsibility for the magazine coming out on time each month. Ms. Kohl previously worked for the now-defunct *Electronic Fun*.

At the same time, it was also announced that Tracie Forman, formerly Associate Editor, has been promoted to Features Editor. The 24-year-old journalist will work closely with Editor Arnie Katz in the preparation of major articles and stories.

EIA PREDICTS SALES BOOM

The Electronic Industries Association (EIA) says that there were 4,300,000 home computers sold in 1983, at an average price of $440. The EIA predicts that 6,600,000 home computers will be sold in 1984, at an average price of $400 each. Videogame console sales, which hit 6,650,000 units in 1983, are expected to shrink in 1984, dropping to an estimated 5 million units.

Game cartridge sales are expected to stay approximately the same in 1984. Sales totaled 75 million in 1983, and are expected to reach around 74,300,000 in '84.

The home computer software market should boom this year. In 1983, sales reached 54,700,000 units. This figure is expected to grow to around 84,500,000 in 1984. The average price per unit was $15 in 1983, and should rise this year to $25.

OZARK SOFTSCAPE REWARDS M.U.L.E. SKINNERS

Can you, as a lowly human, outwit three Mechtron opponents *and* end up with a score of over 100,000 colony total? Ozark Softscape, **M.U.L.E.**'s designer, wants to know about it. The Arkansas-based design team is rewarding outstanding players with a hand-lettered *M.U.L.E.* skinner certificate personally signed by each designer. Just send a snapshot of the final screen to Electronic Arts for the pretty silver-and-black certificate.

M.U.L.E. SKINNER
HAVING MASTERED
The leap of a leggite · the speed of a spheroid
The brute of a bonzoid · the guts of a gullumer,
and
HAVING EXHIBITED
EXTRA TERRITORIAL EXCELLENCE,
Electronic Games
is hereby elected into the
INTERGALACTIC ORDER OF CONFEDERATED MULE SKINNERS
Such honor is dubiously recorded
in Federation Records, Little Rock,
Arkansas
ATTESTED WITH APPRECIATION.
M.U.L.E. was created by Ozark Softscape
and energized at Electronic Arts
Certificate
9

VIDEOGAMES OUTSELL TOYS

According to figures from the Toy Manufacturers of America, videogame software and hardware were unquestioned leaders in toy sales in 1982 — $1088 million in software sales and $900 million in hardware. By comparison, dolls and accessories accounted for $600 million sales, followed closely by non-electronic games and puzzles, at $569 million.

CBS, ACORN INK LICENSING AGREEMENT

CBS Software has entered a pact with Acorn Computers Corp. to license games for conversion to the Acorn British Broadcasting Corp. Microcomputer. Acorn will have world-wide distribution rights for selected CBS software for the Acorn BBC Micro, a computer specifically created for education.

FREE CATALOG OFFERS INFORMATION ABOUT SURGE PROTECTION

Computerists know how damaging spikes and surges can be to equipment and programs, so devices to protect from these electrical mishaps are becoming big news to gamers who want to avoid disruptions, interference or actual damage. Electronic Specialists, Inc. has solutions in a new 40-page catalog that describes protection and interference problems, explains trouble spots, and offers products to cure each one. For a free copy, contact them at P.O. Box 389, Natick, Mass. 01760, or call 800-225-4876 and ask for catalog #841.

APPLE IIc IS MICRO POWER-HOUSE

The pint-size Apple IIc is proof that you can't tell a book by its cover. This 7-1/2-lb. transportable micro is a full-featured computer with 128K of memory, full-stroke 63-key keyboard, and a built-in disk drive. This configuration retails for $1295. The IIc is a member in good standing of the Apple II family, compatible with more than 10,000 existing computer programs. Virtually all games tested so far will run, though exceptions may crop up.

A socket located on a row of ports on the back rear panel is the connection for joystick, paddle and other command control devices. Sound is also much improved. The speaker has a five-octave range and a knob controls the volume.

STUDY REPORTS QUADRUPLED SPENDING

TALMIS' latest study indicates consumers spent $280 million for computer software, videotex, interactive video and robot software in 1982. In 1983 this figure quadrupled to $1.1 billion. TALMIS projects buying for these items will reach $4.1 billion by 1988.

WICO PLAYS DARTES FOR MONEY

WICO, renowned manufacturer of parts and accessories for coin-op games and quality joystick controllers for videogames and computers, is entering the coin-op game market as distributor of **Electronic Dartes.** There are three versions of the coin-operated darts game, each with five contests and three skill levels, playable by one to four gamers. The darts have plastic tips to prevent injuries and the game features continuous dart head scanning and improved scoring accuracy.

Electronic Dartes was created by Industrial Design Electronic Assocts. WICO president Gordon Goranson said of the agreement, "This business partnership allows us to better serve the operator and the industry." He went on, "This is the first full-size coin-operated game for WICO, and it is a move we have been considering for some time."

HOTLINE

GOONEY GOBBLERS STAR IN TURKEY SHOOT

Williams' new coin-snatcher, **Turkey Shoot,** is set on a future earth in which a third of the world's population are turkeys. The arcader mans a front-mounted laser gun controller to target the chunky birds. A special gobble button freezes all turkeys to make them easy targets, but turkey air raids, turkey helicopter getaways, and turkeys disguised as businessmen keep the action interesting. The appealing graphics make this an early line favorite in the "cute game" category.

MUDDY MONITOR? CLEAN THE SCREEN!

Have the graphics been looking a little dingy lately? Maybe it's time for some house cleaning. Dust and grit are attracted to video screens like kids to dirt, but normal household cleaning fluids may damage the system. Screenwipe, from Aldine Paper Co., New York, is a safe CRT cleaner. Moist Screenwipes are impregnated with a formula to remove fingermarks and dirt without abrasive materials. Use a a Screenwipe once a week, throw it away, and watch the picture get brighter. A box of 50 individually packaged Screenwipes is $20 at most computer stores.

APPLE, HES DONATE COMPUTER EXHIBIT

A permanent computer exhibit is now part of the Intrepid Air-Sea-Space Museum in New York City, thanks to the efforts of Human Engineered Software and Apple Computer. A $10,000 check to finance the installation of four Apple systems was presented to a representative of the Museum by HES spokesman Leonard Nimoy at a special ceremony held on the retired aircraft carrier. The occasion also included a pair of auspicious debuts for HES — a new line of educational and ed-game programs called the Science Software Simulation series, and the first major appearance by its celebrity pitchman.

The computers, plus software from HES, will henceforth form a permanent Science and Software display. The overall concept is to give visitors to the Intrepid a chance to experience, albeit vicariously, situations such as building a manned space station, or roaming the undersea world in search of sunken treasures.

VOICE-ACTIVATED LASERDISC GAME DEBUTS

RDI, the company that invented **Dragons Lair's** laserdisc technology, is test-marketing a home laserdisc game unit called Halcyon. Besides its compatibility with commercially-produced home laserdisc movies, Halcyon plays interactive laserdisc games specially designed for the unit. The first titles shown for Halcyon are **Thayer's Quest,** about an apprentice wizard; **Orpheus,** based on Greek mythology; **Adventure in the Carribean,** a nautical yarn; and the live-action interactive horror movie, **The Spirit of Whittier Mansion.**

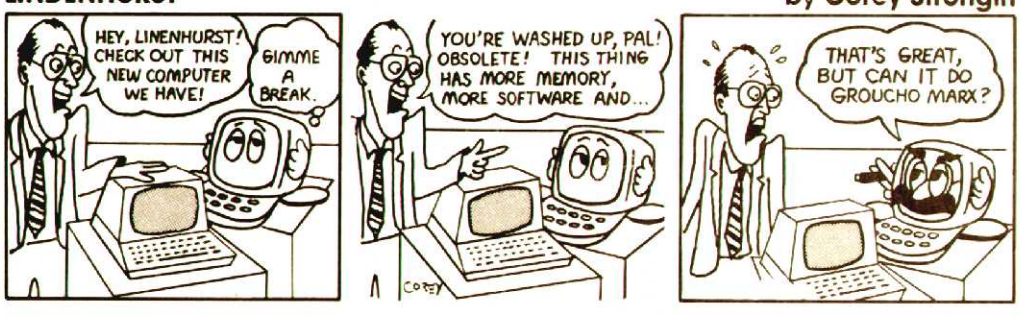
Halcyon is entirely speech-operated, and talks back to the player with a polite, if mechanical, voice. Each game — which the company estimates cost a million dollars each to produce — has several different choices per screen, making the games different every time they're played.

Halcyon's price tag of $2000 is likely to keep it from being the Cabbage Patch doll of 1984, but more affluent gamers will find this talking machine a real conversation piece.

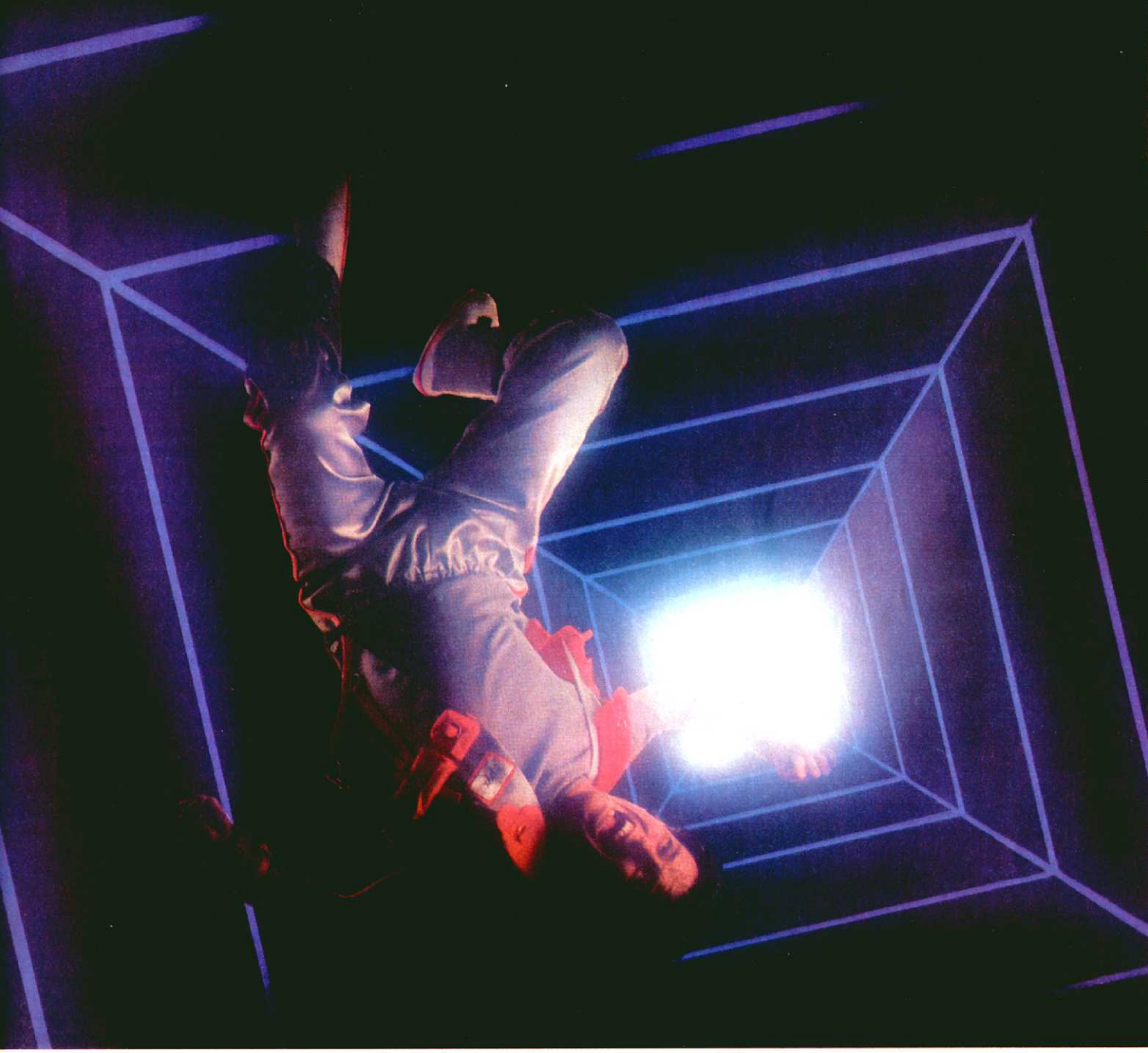
COMPUTER HEADLINES COMIC STRIP

Move over Garfield, here comes a comic strip based on the antics of a lovable microcomputer. Creator Corey Strongin hopes to see the daily strip "Lindenhurst" get rolling on a commercial basis soon, and is currently searching for newspapers interested in carrying the adventures of a wise-cracking micro.

LINDENHURST by Corey Strongin


HEY, LINENHURST! CHECK OUT THIS NEW COMPUTER WE HAVE!
GIMME A BREAK.
YOU'RE WASHED UP, PAL! OBSOLETE! THIS THING HAS MORE MEMORY, MORE SOFTWARE AND...
COREY
THAT'S GREAT, BUT CAN IT DO GROUCHO MARX?

JUMPMAN'S A GREAT GAME. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO WATCH YOUR STEP.



Meet the Alienators. A fiendish bunch who've planted bombs throughout your Jupiter Command Headquarters.

Your job? Use your lightning speed to scale ladders, scurry across girders, climb ropes and race through 30 levels to defuse the bombs before they go off.

That's the kind of hot, non-stop action we've packed into the award-winning,* best-selling Jumpman,™ and into Jumpman Jr.,™ our new cartridge version with 12 all-new, different and exciting screens.

Both games force you to make tough choices. Should you avoid that Alienator, climb to the top and try to work your way down, or try to hurdle him and defuse the bombs closest to you before they go off?

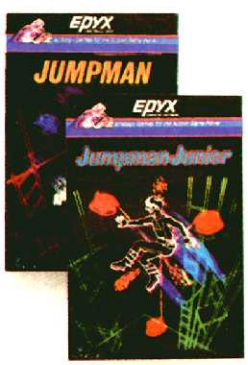
If you move fast you'll earn extra lives. But if you're not careful, it's a long way down.

So jump to it. And find out why Jumpman and Jumpman Jr. are on a level all their own.

One to four players; 8 speeds; joystick control. Jumpman has 30 screens. Jumpman Jr. has 12 screens.

EPYX COMPUTER SOFTWARE

STRATEGY GAMES FOR THE ACTION-GAME PLAYER.



*1983 C.E.S. award winner.

HOTLINE

SOFTWARE STALKS NEW MARKETS

K-Tek Software floor display stands are popping up the darndest places. Titled K-Tek Budget Priced Software, the prepacks contain three copies each of eight games, and are available for the Apple, Atari, C-64 and VIC-20 computers. The company also has prepacks for Atari 2600 and ColecoVision videogame systems.

K-Tek currently has over 160 games, and the company plans to ship new prepacks of budget-priced software every 90 days. The ease of inventory management is helping K-Tek place merchandise in stores that previously never carried games, making new software easier to find.

BLIND DRAGONS LAIR CHAMP

Laserdisc games have opened up a whole new world for Felix Pagan, a blind New Yorker, who practices both **Dragons Lair** and **Space Ace** at the Station Break arcade in Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station. Felix uses the audio cues to guide Dirk and Dexter through their paces.

"With laserdisc games, I can play at the arcade like anyone else," said Felix as he held a tape recorder to the *Space Ace* machine. Don Bluth, creator of both games, was so touched that he sent Flex a *Dragons Lair* T-shirt and a Dirk the Daring videotape.

GAMING GOES HOLLYWOOD

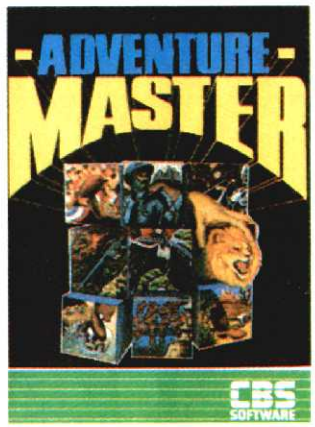
Among the summer of '84 big film releases were a pair of electronic games-related entries. **Cloak and Dagger** stars Henry Thomas ("Eliot" from "E.T.") as a computer whiz whose mystery-solving software program starts happening in real life.

The Last Starfighter uses an oft-discussed plot device: a teenage games-master is recruited by an alien race to live out his favorite coin-op. According to unconfirmed rumor, Atari will release a coin-op based on the film.

KOREAN COMPANY INTRODUCES MINI FLOPPY DISKS

Sunkyong Group, a South Korean conglomerate, has designs on America's growing market for computer disks. The company's North American subsidiary, Sunkyong International, has unveiled a line of 5-1/4-in. mini floppy disks, boasting that all ingredients, from the petrochemical base of the polyester film to the plastics and the metal screws in the case, are manufacturered under their rigid specifications in their own plants. According to the company, this quality control guarantees the disks to be reliable and long-lasting. They are available in virtually every configuration from single-sided, to double density double-sided mini-disks, at popular prices in most computer stores.

WHAT'S HOT



Computer adventure games just keep growing in popularity, and now there's a way for even the nonprogrammers to take a stab at creating their own quest program. **Adventure Master** (CBS Software) and **Adventure Creator** (Spinnaker) are menu-driven guides for the novice who has a fantasy world inside, kicking and screaming to get out.

Even better, they're easy and fun to use. And the resulting games aren't too bad.

CONSUMER BEAT

Atari has cut the price of the Model 2600 videogame system to around $60, and Model 5200 (which the company quit manufacturing but promises to support with software) to $90...

EnTech has extended the deadline to December 1, 1984 for entries in the **Studio 64** Computer Song Writing Contest, to allow composers more time to complete their masterpieces. Computerists submit songs written using *Studio 64* together with proof of purchase. For complete rules, write Computer Song Writing Contest, P.O. Box 881, Sun Valley, Ca. 91353.

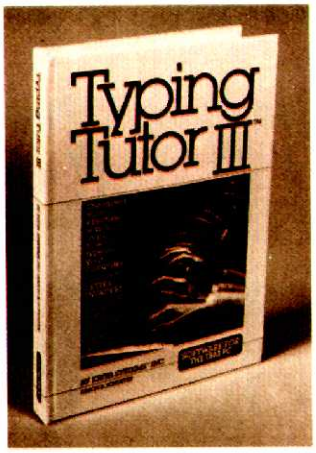
Last year Scholastic announced it would launch a magazine for Adam owners. The publisher expected "Adam Family Computing" to be supported by new Adam owners. Now Scholastic has backed away from the project, saying, "There's no point to produce a magazine if there is not a profit potential in it." Instead of sending the new magazine, in accordance with the Coleco agreement, Scholastic will send free issues of "Family Computing to some 40,000 people who have returned Adam warranty cards to Coleco...

The National Registry For Computers, San Diego, Ca., has a new service for micro-owners. For an annual $20 fee, they'll maintain a file of serialized computer equipment for you. Then in case of

loss they'll notify all initially registered owners, law enforcement agencies and applicable insurance carriers to be on the alert for the hot items. . .

Simon & Schuster is packing **Typing Tutor III** like a spiral-bound book, so the shopper can read the manual before buying the software. The program disk is sealed in a holder on the last page of the manual that requires scissors to open. . .

According to Milton Bradley, over 90% of the Vectrex product line inventory is already sold out, and as soon as warehouse supplies are depleted, the only Vectrex products available will be those on the dealer's shelves. . .



Micro Goodies catalogs lots of unusual products for gamers, both whimsical and useful, such as computer greeting cards, milk chocolate diskettes, and T-shirts with slogans in computereze. For a free copy, write Micro Goodies, Catalog Request, CN5283, Princeton, NJ 08540.

HARDWARE BEAT

Suncom's Starfighter for Apple is an analog controller compatible with Apple and Franklin computers, soon to be adapted for the IBM-PC, TRS-80 and others. Retailing for $49.95, it boasts only one moving part. (Most sticks have 30-40 moving parts.) The stick has a right- and lefthand fire button, plus an alternate fire button for second functions, and a centering adjustment. Additionally, a hi/lo sensitivity switch provides for faster or slower responses and a throw selector gives either a short or long movement to the joystick. The two-year warranty can be expanded to three years for a small additional fee. . .

Apple Computer is seeking Japanese-language software programs for the Lisa and Macintosh. Currently Apple has 30-40,000 Apple II's in Japan, and this marks the first effort by the company to attract Japanese writers to work with Apple Computer Japan in Tokyo. The company believes that more available Japanese language software will help sales of Apple computers in that country.

Tandy Corp. has begun an in-home demonstration service in key cities for home computers and expects to take it national within three years. The free demonstration is for a basic $1475 package that includes the Radio Shack Color Computer II, disk drive, joysticks, modem, software and training sessions. A $1975 package also includes a printer and word processing program.

Sinclair plans to market a $499 computer in the US this autumn. The British company will sell the Sinclair QL by mail, in a move that company spokesmen indicate is meant to forestall ruinous price wars like the one sparked by their first computer, the Timex Sinclair 1000. The QL comes with software for word processing, spread-sheet calculating, filing and drawing. It has a typewriter-style keyboard, weighs three pounds, and works with color monitors and standard printers. The computer uses software stored on microcassette tapes. . .

Atari will introduce a new high-end computer before Christmas. The 64K machine will retail for around $1000, with a build-in modem and disk drive. Each disk will store 250 pages of information, and the drive operates five times faster than current Atari models. Currently monikered the 1450, the computer will have a new name before it goes to market.

Atari's new Mindlink controller connects with a remote-control infrared receiver and allows the user to direct on-screen activity with just the power of thought. It retails for about $79 and uses positive and negative impulses from muscles in the forehead to direct an on-screen cursor. The Mindlink works with special software for the Atari 2600 and 7800 videogame systems, and with computer software that will be made available in 1985.

ATARI, ANDROBOT BREAK CIRCUIT

Earlier this year, Atari announced plans to market a small game-playing robot manufactured by Androbot, Inc. Now Atari has shelved plans for such a product for unspecified reasons.

Although Atari spokesmen declined comment, robotic experts say the control system for such projects is proving to be more difficult than originally anticipated, necessitating the delay in production.

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS GET COMPUTERS

The Lowell, Ma. school system is integrating computers into the regular curriculum for roughly 5,000 students, kindergarten through 12th grades. A computer network utilizing 138 Acorn Microcomputers will be installed in seven of Lowell's 27 schools. Students will receive from 40 minutes to one hour a week of computer education, in programs that stress basic skills, reading, computer literacy and word processing. After the first year, Lowell educators hope to expand the computer network to the other 20 schools.

ATARI DEVELOPS PROGRAM FOR TODDLERS

Computer users seem to be getting younger and younger, a fact that Atari has taken note of in a practical way. Working with the renowned child psychologist, Dr. Lee Salk, Atari designers have developed **Peekaboo,** a software program for toddlers 1-3 years old. According to the company, *Peekaboo* is designed to strengthen parent-child communication and aid in the early development of motor and cognitive skills. The child uses an Atari Kids' Controller — which was especially designed for small hands — to control an on-screen cat named Smart Seymour. For use on both the Atari 2600 and the new 7800 Pro System, the program will be available in December, in time for Christmas buying.

EX-COMMODORE PRES. TRAMIEL BUYS ATARI

Less than six months after resigning as President of Commodore International Ltd., Commodore founder Jack Tramiel stunned the computer industry by buying a controlling share in Atari. The total selling price of Atari's home computer and videogame divisions, representing over 75% of Atari's total sales, was $240 million. According to Warner, the transaction resulted in a pre-tax loss of $425 million for the entertainment giant in its second quarter.

Under the new agreement, Warner is set to become a

partner in Mr. Tramiel's new company, Tramiel Technology Ltd., while the founder of Commodore will have the opportunity to buy one million shares of Warner Communications Inc. stock. Warner will retain Atari's coin-operated game division and Ataritel, the home communications venture, obtained when it bought Atari in 1976 for $28 million.

"During the past 18 months, WCI has spared no effort to identify and address the problems that have plagued Atari," said Steven J. Ross, Warner's chairman and chief executive. "We have concluded, however, that we must constructively channel our energies and resources to the balance of WCI's businesses." Warner's other ventures include motion pictures, records and tapes, cable television, and book publishing.

The sale of Atari isn't expected to have a negative impact on consumers, though Atari's emphasis is expected to shift away from videogames and toward computers. Mr. Tramiel has been credited with the marketing strategies that led to the Commodore 64's current position as the top-selling low-end computer.

EG Readers Pick Their Favorite Games

Most Popular Videogame Cartridges

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Times on List	Game Title	System	Manufacturer
1	1	2	Pitfall! II	Atari 2600	Activision
2	9	6	Miner 2049er	ColecoVision	MicroLab
3	—	8	Advanced Dungeons & Dragons	Intellivision	Mattel
4	8	13	River Raid	Atari 2600	Activision
5	10	19	Pitfall!	Atari 2600	Activision
6	12	4	Mr. Do!	Colecovision	Coleco
7	New	New	Super Action Baseball	Colecovision	Coleco
8	—	15	Donkey Kong	Colecovision	Coleco
9	3	17	Zaxxon	Colecovision	Coleco
10	6	3	Space Shuttle	Atari 2600	Activision
11	14	2	Decathlon	Atari 2600	Activision
12	—	2	Baseball	Atari 5200	Atari
13	7	8	Ms. Pac Man	Atari 2600	Atari
14	New	New	Pengo	Atari 5200	Atari
15	—	5	Centipede	Atari 5200	Atari

Most Popular Computer Games

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Times on List	Game	System	Manufacturer
1	1	3	Zork I	Most Systems	Infocom
2	9	3	Buck Rogers	Coleco Adam	Coleco
3	New	New	Flight Simulator II	Most Systems	SubLogic
4	New	New	Pole Position	Most Systems	Atari, Atarisoft
5	4	2	Ultima III	Most Systems	Origin Systems
6	New	New	Archon	Atari, C-64	Electronic Arts
7	—	4	Loderunner	Most Systems	Broderbund
8	2	13	Miner 2049er	Most Systems	Big 5, MicroLab, Reston
9	New	New	Jumpman	Atari, C-64	Epyx
10	New	New	Zork II	Most Systems	Infocom

Most Popular Coin-Op Videogames

Position This Month	Position Last Month	Times On List	Game	Manufacturer
1	1	6	Dragon's Lair	Starcom
2	2	7	Star Wars	Atari
3	5	3	M.A.C.H. 3	Mylstar
4	6	3	Track & Field	Konami
5	New	New	Space Ace	Starcom
6	10	3	Pole Position II	Atari
7	New	New	Spy Hunter	Bally/Midway
8	New	New	Firefox	Atari
9	3	10	Pole Position	Atari
10	New	15	Ms. Pac Man	Bally/Midway

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION.™
YOUR MISSION–TO SAVE THE WORLD.

As a member of the exclusive Anti-Computer Terrorist Squad (ACT), your mission is to find and reach the infamous Elvin, who is holding the world's population hostage under threat of nuclear annihilation. You must negotiate a path through the rooms and tunnels of his headquarters trying to avoid Elvin's robot protectors.

Should you try to outrun or jump over the next robot or play it safe and take the time to assemble the codes needed to deactivate the robots and then to find and stop Elvin.

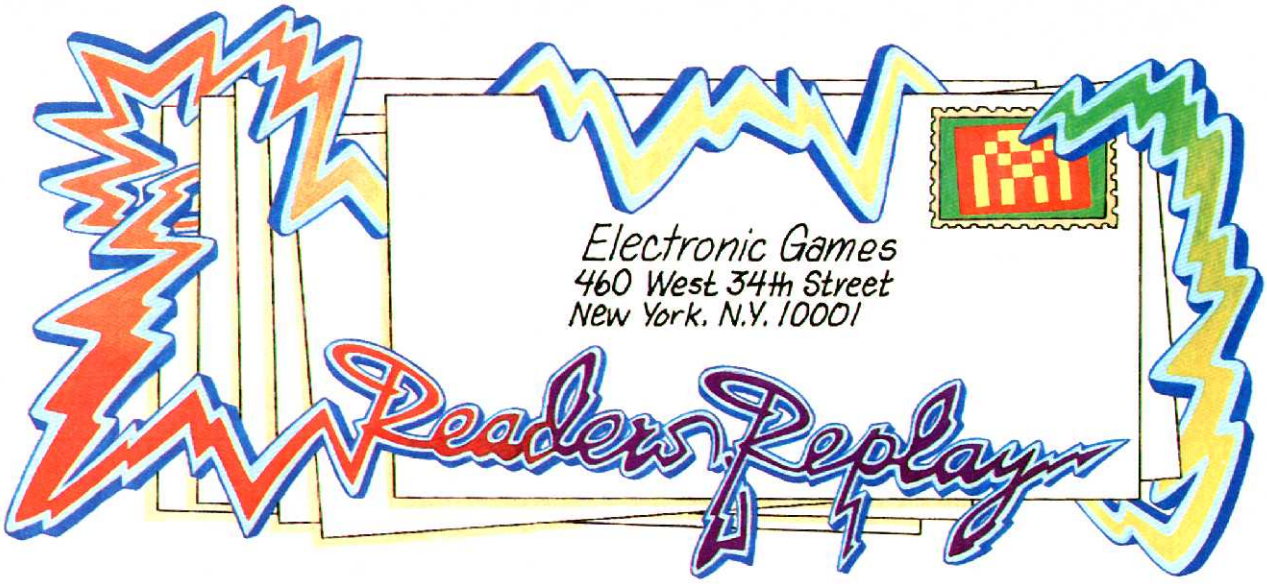
Use your camera to photograph as many clues as possible to find the password which will allow you to penetrate Elvin's control room.

Your Mission—To Save The World, But Hurry!

One player; joystick controlled.

EPYX™ COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Strategy Games for the Action-Game Player



DOC DIAGNOSES A SOFTWARE SHORTAGE

I am writing to you on behalf of a "friend" currently in the Computer Users' Hospital of Waco. What I am about to show you are the files on his condition. Please try to hold back the tears. My friend's name has been withheld for obvious purposes.

Patient: John Doe

Diagnosis: Deadly depression caused by the lack of games, construction sets, and graphics creations software for the Adam Computer System. Also extreme boredom caused by the constant play of the only game available for his system — *Buck Rogers: Planet of Zoom.*

Care: The only known cure is for the Game Doctor to find out when some new games will be produced on digital data packs.

As you can see, it's a sad, sad case. Just before he slipped into a "Colecocoma," he mumbled the words, "Where's my **Tunnels and Trolls**, **Sword and Sorceror**, **Troll's Tale. . .**"

Casey Jones
Waco, TX

Ed: According to the Doc's diagnosis, four digital data games are available from Coleco at this very moment: **Donkey Kong**, **Donkey Kong Junior**, **Zaxxon** *and* **Super Subroc**. *In addition, Victory Software has some digital data pack games for the Adam.*

If the condition persists, have your friend take two silicon chips and call the Doc in the morning.

ONE FOR THE RECORD

In regard to the letter concerning software piracy in your November issue, I have one comment. The law does allow the rightful owner of a software package to make *one* archival copy. This copy may be modified for use by the owner.

Michael Hamaoka
Havre, MT

BUCK ROGERS (COLECO)

CONTROLLERS FOR THE HANDICAPPED

It was with great interest that I read your article "Gaming and the Handicapped" (Feb. 1983).

I am the parent of a 4½-year-old child who recently suffered an attack of a virus in his brain stem which has left him a quadriplegic, but with unimpaired mental faculties.

The purpose of this letter is to ask for your assistance regarding any technical information applicable to this situation, especially anything relating to controllers, pressure switches, and the like.

Ronald A. Cowden
New Zealand

Ed: Anyone who wants this information can write to Ken at KY Enterprises, 195 Claremont Ave. #288, Long Beach, CA 90803.

WHAT'S BAD FOR THE GOOSE MAY BE GOOD FOR THE GANDER

In your July issue, you did a review on **Computer Wars** for the VIC-20. The review said, "*Computer Wars* has mediocre graphics, poor sound effects, and only fair play-action." This is understandable coming from a VIC-20, but *Computer Wars* is also made for Atari computers, which have better graphics and sound effects. People who read the *Computer Wars* review are automatically going to think it's a

worthless game, VIC-20 or any other version. I've played the Atari version and I think it's great! Is it possible for you to include most, if not all, versions of a game when a review is done on it? Reviews on just one computer can give false impressions.

Greg Blois
Colorado Springs, CO

Ed: There are a few problems with reviewing all the versions of a game at one time: First, the translations often come out much later, sometimes more than six months later. Then, there's the space problem: It's really not feasible to devote the majority of our review pages to just one game. Finally, why should owners of one system care if their version is only second-best to one for a computer or videogame system that they don't own? They want to know how good the game will be on their machine.

To alleviate some of the confusion among multiple translation releases, we've introduced a "Translations" section in the computer section, which covers the main similarities — and differences — that occur in multiple translation games. And, if a game is virtually the same on several systems, like most adventure games, we'll try to indicate that in the review heading.

Thanks for writing.

COLECO TO THE RESCUE

I just read the Game Doctor's comments on the Coleco Adam. I haven't had any trouble getting through to Coleco on the hot line, nor have I had any problems with the computer itself.

I suggest that anyone needing goodies for their Adam write directly

Coleco's Adam

to Coleco. I've ordered from them more than once and they get faster every time. If someone sends a letter to Coleco, they'll go so far as to call and call until they reach him. The people on the phone are always nice.

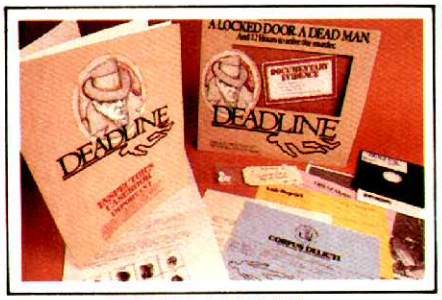
Thanks to the Doc. Please send me his bill. And by the way, I enjoy his column and am going to subscribe to your magazine.

Harry L. McDonald
Charleston, IL

QUIRK OF THE MONTH

I found a mistake in Infocom's **Deadline**. Go into George's bedroom. If he's not there, wait for him. Then type "play a tape." It will tell you what tape is playing. If it is the "Navajo Night Chant," say "turn stereo off." Up to this point George has to be there.

Type "wait until (type two hours



DEADLINE (INFOCOM)

from the current time)." Then George leaves. It will ask if you want to keep waiting. Type "y". The computer will say: "THE SROBNER UNJZNSBIVQ QDOESNT TWFUO GEORGE WITH GDLGFROM KSEEMS XE HAS ENDED (AND NOT SOON ENOUGH)."

Robert Mc Alhany Jr.
Richardson, TX

Ed: You should be receiving your Paxxon Pac-Man Wall Clock shortly after this letter sees print, Richard. Thanks for sharing the fruits of your sleuthing with us.

GUSTBUSTER GOOF

The September issue of Electronic Games featured a review of Sunrise Software's **Gust Buster** which actually referred to the Commodore 64 version of the game. Sunrise also has *Gust Buster* for the ColecoVision, which has been nominated for a 1984 Electronic Games Arcade Award. Electronic Games particularly regrets the error, since the Colecovision cartridge is outstanding in most ways.

The primary difference between the two editions is the control system. Watch for a review of the ColecoVision cart in an upcoming issue of EG.

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Meet The 1985 ARCADE CONTEST

Help Your Favorites Win

In less than two months, the makers and shakers of electronic gaming will converge on New York City for one of the industry's most important annual events. Twenty-six outstanding games, which reached national distribution between September 1, 1983 and August 31, 1984, will reap the ultimate reward — a 1985 Arcade Award.

Reese Communications, publisher of ELECTRONIC GAMES, began sponsorship of the Arcade Awards five years ago. The idea then, as now, was to salute design excellence in the field of electronic gaming. Last year, more than 10,000 gamers from all over North America cast their official ballots in the 1984 Arkie election, making it the biggest-ever sampling of the opinions of the gaming public.

By THE EDITORS
OF ELECTRONIC GAMES

ARCADE AWARDS RULES FOR ELIGIBILITY

The rules which govern the selection of the Arcade Awards and Certificates of Merit are as follows:

1. All electronic games marketed nationally between September 1, 1983 and August 31, 1984 are eligible.
2. No individual design may win an Arcade Award and a Certificate of Merit, nor more than one of either distinction.
3. When a game is adapted for play on more than one system, the principal eligible edition will be the original version, as determined by the Arcade Awards Judging Committee. All editions of a winning game which, in the opinion of the Judging Committee, are of comparable quality may enjoy the privileges associated with winning the award, such as use of the special package symbol.
4. Two editions of the same basic design will both be considered eligible if, in the opinion of the Judging Committee, they represent substantially different creative effort and are both worthy of an award.
5. The same basic game design may win an Arcade Award and/or Certificate of Merit in each of the four broad categories of electronic gaming — videogames, coin-ops, stand-alones and computer games. The intent of these rules is to prevent any single game from winning more than one award in each of the broad categories.

COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

1985 COMPUTER GAME OF THE YEAR

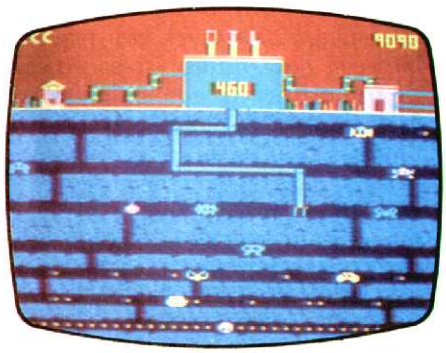
Definition: This Arkie salutes the best all-around game created for one or more popular microcomputer systems. Play-action, graphics, theme and historical impact are factors to consider.

Nominees: **Jack Attack** (Commodore/C-64) is a multi-screen action-strategy test with lots of bouncing, jumping and squishing of nasties; **The Heist** (Micro Lab/Ap) sends secret agent Graham Crackers through a multi-level museum to steal all the artwork so that he can find the hidden microfilm; **Oil's Well** (Sierra On-Line/Most computers) dares the gamer to steer a gobbling drill through dangerous terrain; **One on One** Electronic Arts/Ap, C-64) uses sophisticated machine intelligence to produce a realistic real-time simulation of Julius Erving and Larry Bird going head-to-head against each other; **Ul-**

VIDEO AWARDS

Gaming's Biggest Prize

Which programs will earn gaming's answer to the Oscars and Emmys? Only the readers of ELECTRONIC GAMES can answer that question. The nominees in each Arcade Award category are briefly described on the following pages. Study the editors' commentary, re-play the titles you don't remember, check out some of the ones you may not have seen yet and then choose your slate of winners. To make your voice heard in the hobby's most important competition, just fill out the ballot — or use a photocopy to keep your copy of EG pristine — and return it to ELECTRONIC GAMES by the deadline. A major review and analysis of the winners of the Arcade Awards and Certificates of Merit will appear, as in past years, in the January issue of ELECTRONIC GAMES.



OIL'S WELL (SIERRA ON-LINE)

tima III (Origin/Most computers) is the latest and greatest from Lord British.

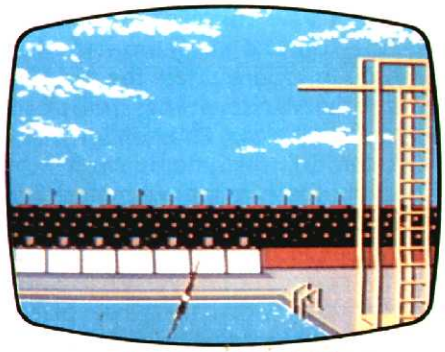
1985 BEST COMPUTER SPORTS GAME

Definition: This award goes to the game, action or statistical replay which most enjoyably simulates an athletic contest.

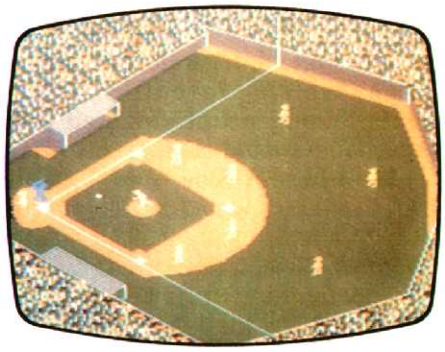
Nominees: HESGames 84 (HesWare/C-64) presents a slate of events, highlighted by weightlifting, in beautiful hi-res graphics; **Ringside Seat** (Strategic Simulations/Ap, C-64) simulates great boxers of yesteryear and today; **Rally Speedway** (Adventure International/At) is a rollicking roadracing game with a lot of the flavor of slot cars; **Starleague Baseball** (Gamestar/At, C-64) uses sensational graphics to dramatize an exciting action hardball simulation; **Statis Pro Baseball** (Avalon Hill/Ap) brings the popular non-electronic statistical replay baseball boardgame to the home screen; **Summer Games** (Epyx/C-64) showcases eight athletic events, including the breathtaking platform diving sequence.

1985 BEST COMPUTER ADVENTURE

Definition: The victor in this category should be the microcomputer program which best incorporates the concepts of role-playing and first-person vicarious adventuring in its design.



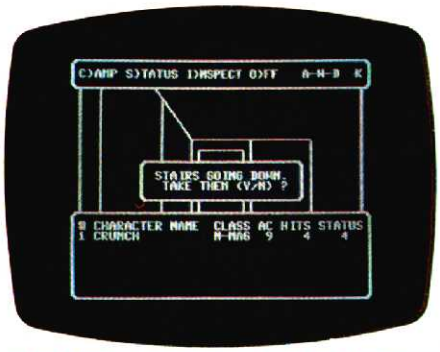
SUMMER GAMES (EPYX)



STAR LEAGUE BASEBALL (GAMESTAR)

Nominees: Dallas Quest (DataSoft/C-64) puts the player in the employ of Sue Ellen Ewing on a mission to find the key to the fortune discovered by Jock just before his 'copter crashed; **Enchanter** (Infocom/Most computers) is the first in the series of prose adventures, intended to parallel **Zork,** which emphasizes spellcasting; **Gateway to Apshai** (Epyx/At, C-64) is an updated and refined version of the action-adventure system which gamers have enjoyed for years; **Infidel** (Infocom/Most computers) puts the computerist in the dusty boots of an explorer who would turn Indiana Jones green with envy; **Mabel's Mansion** (DataMost/Ap) gives us action

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



WIZARDRY III: LEGACY OF LLYLGAMYN (SIR-TECH)

adventure with overtones of both humor and spookiness; **Questron** (Strategic Simulations/Ap, At) features a quest motif with mechanics resembling the work of Lord British, but with refinements such as joystick control; **Wizardry III: Legacy of Llylgamyn** (Sir-Tech/Ap) is the newest scenario in the series which emphasizes the use of parties consisting of characters with varied abilities.

1985 BEST COMPUTER ACTION GAME

Definition: The computer software program, regardless of memory size, which presents the most entertaining action-oriented play-mechanic should capture this Arkie.

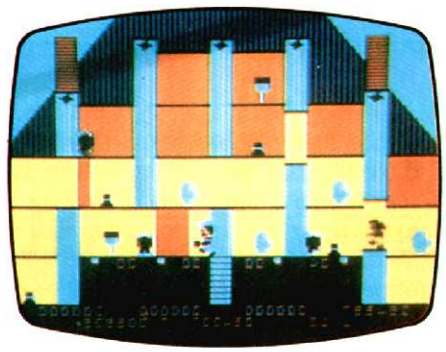
Nominees: **Blue Max** (Synapse/At, C-64) puts would-be pilots in control of a horizontally scrolling fighter/bomber on a dangerous sortie over enemy territory; **Bruce Lee** (Datasoft/At) continues the legend of the late actor in game form with screen after screen of peril — and plenty of martial arts mayhem; **Juice** (Tronix/Atari, C-64) is a pattern shifting game with some literally electrifying visual touches; **Space Taxi** (Muse/C-64) offers thrill-packed shifts for video cabbies, who must pick up and drop off fares on the wildest collection of playfields imaginable; **The Spy Strikes Back** (Penguin/Ap) sends the player on a mission in which the art of not being seen must be mastered to stay alive; **Zeppelin** (Synapse/At, C-64) has a playfield which scrolls in all directions as the player navigates the gasbag through the heavily defended cavern of the Timelords in an attempt to escape.

SPACE TAXI (MUSE)

1985 BEST COMPUTER GAME AUDIO-VISUAL EFFECTS

Definition: This award honors the program with the most outstanding sound and graphics, with special consideration given to the application of those effects to fundamental aspects of the game, such as play-action and theme.

Nominees: **Bristles** (First Star/At, C-64) is an area-covering contest in which the player/painter races around re-coloring the walls; **Bugaboo's** (Quicksilva/C-64) lovable hero is a little bug who must jump from perch to perch to rise to the top of the screen and freedom; **Demon Attack** (Imagic/PCjr) never looked better than it does in this beautifully rendered edition; **Flip & Flop** (First Star/At, C-64) looks at its multiple playfields from two angles — Flip the kangaroo hops from square to square across the top, then Mitch the Monkey swings from play to play from below; **Pharaoh's Pyramid** (Master Control Systems/At) tells the tale of Little Achmed, who must fight the gods themselves while building the pyramids in this color-changing contest; **Rootin' Tootin'** (HesWare/C-64) mixes music with mazes as the player/tube must blow away evil instruments with hot licks.



BRISTLES (FIRST STAR)

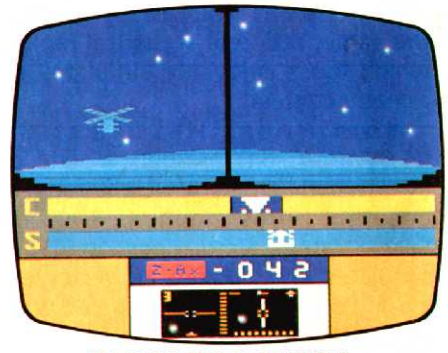
PHARAOH'S PYRAMID (MASTER CONTROL)

VIDEOGAME DIVISION

1985 VIDEOGAME OF THE YEAR

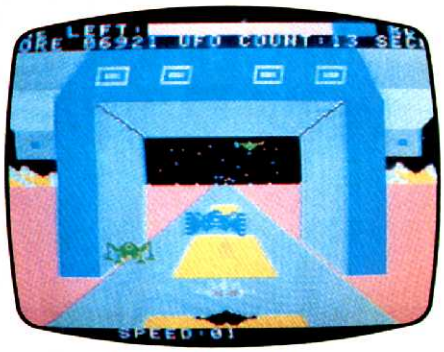
Definition: This Arcade Award honors the best all-around videogame cartridge of the year, regardless of memory size.

Nominees: **Ballblazer** (Atari-Lucasfilm/5200) gives two players a bird-eye view of this fast-paced sport of tomorrow by employing a split viewscreen; **Frogger II** (Parker Brothers/5200, C-V) returns the popular star of **Frogger** to the home screen with three interconnected playfields full of action and tactical possibilities; **Gust Buster** (Sunrise/C-V) challenges the player to use balloon power to steer a vendor through an amusement park obstacle course, riding the winds into and out of danger; **Q*bert** (Parker Brothers/5200, C-V) brings the block-hopper home in fine form; **Space Shuttle** (Activision/2600) is an intricate simulation of the flights which may one day make space part of Americans' everyday lives.



SPACE SHUTTLE (ACTIVISION)

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



BUCK ROGERS (COLECO)

1985 BEST ACTION VIDEOGAME

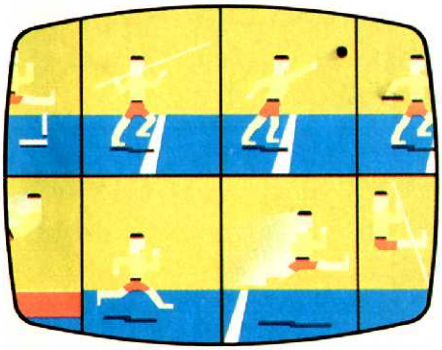
Definition: The most dynamic play-action of the year is what makes a game a winner in this category.

Nominees: **Buck Rogers** (Sega, Coleco/5200, C-V) is a multi-phase shoot-out in which the player pilots Buck Rogers' spaceship low over the Planet of Zoom; **Bump 'n Jump** Sega/5200, C-V) presents a novel approach to road racing in which the cars can leap over obstacles; **Centipede** (AtariSoft/C-V) is as fast and fabulous as ever on this system; **Robot Tank** (Activision/2600) puts the player in the turret of a powerful tank of the far future, **Robotron** (AtariSoft/5200) presents screen full of sound and fury, as deadly robots converge on the hero from all directions.

1985 BEST SPORTS VIDEOGAME

Definition: This Arkie goes to the videogame cartridge, regardless of memory, which best simulates an athletic contest in electronic form.

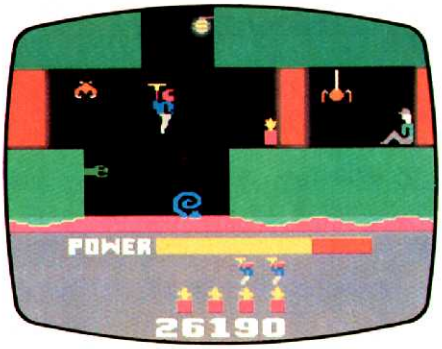
Nominees: **Baseball** (Coleco/CV) gives the game a new visual perspective and allows strong interaction between batter and pitcher; **RealSports Baseball** (Atari/5200) has superb graphics to enhance its excellent action-simulation of the national pastime; **Decathlon** (Activision/2600) has all 10 events of the classic athletic test of all-around prowess; **Football** (Coleco/C-V) utilizes three-quarter sideline perspective to generate tons of pigskin excitement; **Pitstop** (Epyx/C-V) simulates automobile racing, including the need to pull over periodically to refuel and repair; **RealSports Soccer** (Atari/5200) has the fluidity and seesaw action which makes the actual sport so popular throughout the world.



DECATHLON (ACITIVISION)

1985 BEST ADVENTURE VIDEOGAME

Definition: This Arkie salutes the videogame cartridge, regardless of memory size, which best utilizes the concepts of role playing and first-person adventuring.



H.E.R.O. (ACTIVISION)

Nominees: **H.E.R.O.** (Activision/2600) sends the gamer deep into the bowels of the Earth to save trapped miners; **Montezuma's Revenge** (Parker Brothers/5200, C-V) explores the perils and treasures which lurk within the strange Mayan temple; **Pitfall! II** (Activision/2600) continues the adventures of Pitfall Harry in an even more varied and dangerous land; **Quest for Quintana Roo** (Sunrise Software/C-V) is a multi-screen action-adventure in which the electronic explorer must enter and search a Mexican pyramid; **Tutenkham** (Parker Brother/C-V) is a colorful home edition of this maze contest.

1985 BEST VIDEOGAME AUDIO-VISUAL EFFECTS

Definition: This statuette goes to the videogame cartridge, regardless of memory size, which features sound and graphics which do most to enhance the player's gaming pleasure.

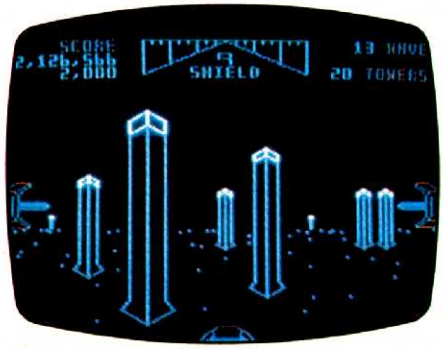
STARGATE (ATARI)

Nominees: **Battlezone** (Atari/2600) offers classy raster visuals to replace the original coin-op vector graphics; **Congo Bongo** (Sega/5200, C-V) pumps extra excitement into the jungle climbing game motif with detailed scenery shown in unusual three-quarter perspective; **Dragonfire** (Imagic/C-V) provides a fresh slant on the Intellivision program by translating it into three-quarter perspective with increased visual detail; **Squish 'Em** (Interphase/C-V) needs no hardware to make its hero Sam talk to the player in clear English as he climbs the partially finished skycraper to get the satchel of money; **Stargate** (AtariSoft/CV), a tough test of any gamer's skill.

COMPUTER VIDEOGAME DIVISION

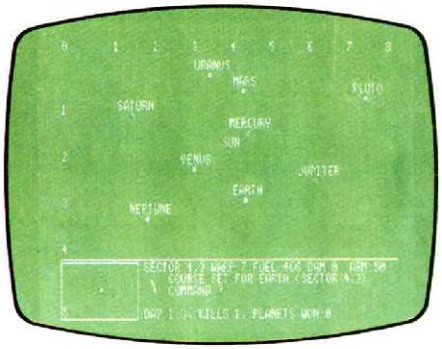
1985 SCIENCE FICTION FANTASY VIDEO COMPUTER GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: The object of this

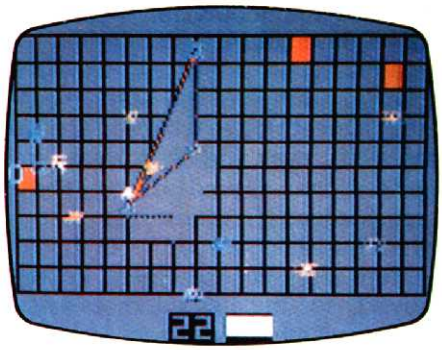


STAR WARS (PARKER BROS.)

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



TITAN EMPIRE (MUSE)

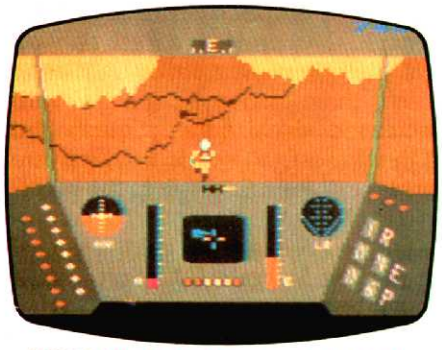


LIFESPAN (TRAPEZE)

BOUNCING KAMUNGAS (PENGUIN)

category is to honor the videogame or computer software program which makes the best use of a science fiction or fantasy theme.

Nominees: **Dragonriders of Pern** (Epyx/At) turns major elements from Anne McCaffery's Hugo Award-winning series into a fine action-strategy program; **Rescue on Fractalus** (Atari-Lucasfilm/5200) is a first-person spaceship piloting game that makes the home arcader feel just like the hero of a mini-movie, battling against odds to fulfill a deadly mission of mercy; **Star Wars** (Parker Brothers/Most systems) offers the best imitation yet of color vector graphics in a multi-phase action contest; **Rug Rider** (International Tri Micro/C-64) departs from the usual action-adventure by giving the on-screen character a magic carpet to ride, but it vies with any title in variety of situations and tactical options; **Titan Empire** (Muse/Ap) mixes action and strategy in a battle to keep marauders from Saturn's moon from overrunning the entire solar system; **Zombies** (Bram/At, C-64) features an assortment of weird worlds across which to adventure as zombies and other fell creature chase the player's video surrogate relentlessly.


RESCUE ON FRACTALUS (ATARI/LUCASFILM)

1985 BEST ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE PROGRAM

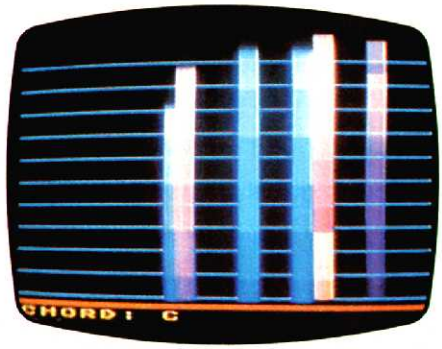
Definition: This Arkie, new this year, honors the best non-game recreational computer or videogame program.

Nominees: Aerobics (Spinnaker/At) is the latest expression of the physical fitness craze, bringing the computer to the aid of would-be Fondas and Simmonses; **Biofeedback** (Hesware/Ap) provides the opportunity for computerists to reduce stress and tension with scientific techniques; **Dancing Feats** (Softsync/At) is a one-person joystick band that lets even non-musicians pound out a listenable tune at the flick of a controller stick; **MovieMaker** (Reston/At) lets even non-programmers create their own short animated films; **Songwriter** (Scarborough/At) is the kind of composition program that any latter day Mozart or Haydn would have to love; **Windows to the Galaxies** (Commodore/C-64) lets the amateur astronomer gaze at the stars and planets even on the cloudiest night — and shows the heavenly sights as they would be seen from any point on Earth.

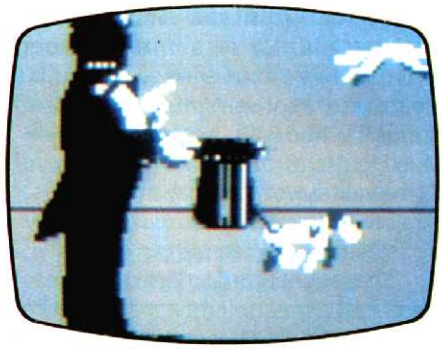
1985 MOST INNOVATIVE ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE

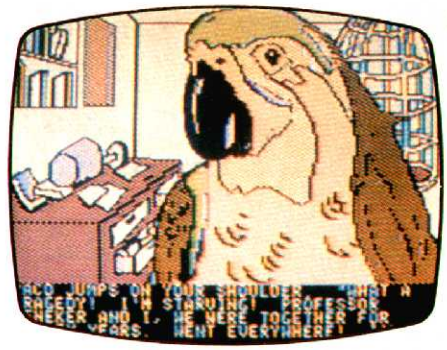
Definition: Fresh ideas are the lifeblood of gaming, so this award goes to the game or entertainment program, videogame or computer game, which most clearly provides electronic gaming with something new under the sun.

Nominees: **Amazon** (Trillium/Ap) takes the illustrated adventure to new heights with outstanding animated artwork and a plot by novelist Michael Crichton; **Bannercatch** (Spinnaker/At) lets two players, each with a separate display, team up in a friendly game of tag against an army of robots; **Cell Defense** (HesWare/Ap) makes an absorbing action-strategy game out of directing the fight of a body's immune system against the onslaught of a variety of diseases; **Lifespan** (Trapeze/At)



DANCING FEATS (SOFTSYNC)


MOVIEMAKER (RESTON)


AMAZON (TRILLIUM)

Pride In Being One Of The Best Is Part Of The Navy Adventure.

You set out to learn a skill. You end up with a kind of pride you didn't know was possible. You're Navy-trained and now you know how it feels to be one of the best.

The Navy Adventure starts with a choice of over sixty career fields including advanced communications, micro-electronics, aviation, even nuclear power.

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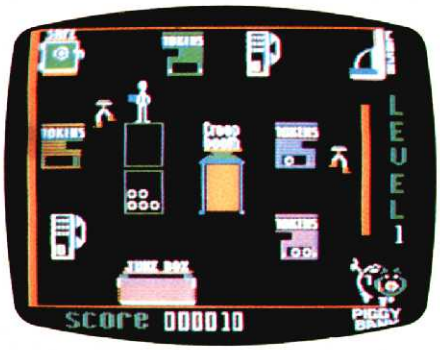
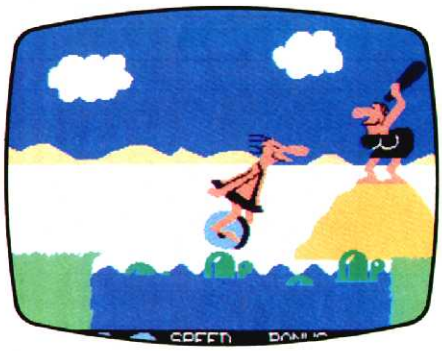
It's a part of the Navy Adventure you'll remember for the rest of your life. Call toll-free, 800-327-NAVY. Find out more about it.

Navy. It's Not Just A Job, It's An Adventure.

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



SPARE CHANGE (BRODERBUND)



B.C.'S QUEST FOR TIRES (SIERRA ON-LINE)

SOLAR FOX (CBS)

is finally available to the general public after amassing a big reputation with its little-circulated cart, and the good news is that the disk edition is even better, with much more satisfying graphics at each stage of human existence; **Little Red Riding Hood** (Playground/At, C-64) tells little children the famous fairy tale with lots of electronic trimmings; **World's Greatest Baseball Game** (Epyx/C-64) offers the best-looking statistical replay game visuals ever programmed for a micro, plus one- and two-player versions of an arcade-style roundball game.

1985 MOST HUMOROUS VIDEO COMPUTER GAME

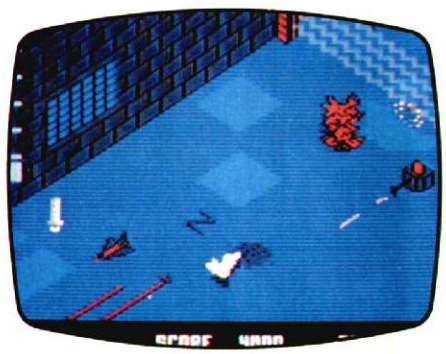
Definition: The computer or video game which gives players the biggest chuckles, regardless of format or memory size, will walk away with the statuette in this category.

Nominees: Boulder Dash (First Star, Micro Lab/Most computers) puts the player in charge of Rockford, an industrious little tunneler who must burrow through dozens of playfields in the quest to dig up all the jewels; **Bouncing Kamungas** (Penguin/Ap) is a light-hearted action game for which "look out below!" could be the motto; **Drol** (Broderbund/Ap, At, C-64) injects a liberal dose of humor into the mission-completion format in a game in which the goal is to reunite a couple of kids — and their pets — with their mother; **Quest for Tires** (Sierra On-Line/Most computers) chronicles Thor's perilous journey through the prehistoric world to rescue the Cute Chick with rare wit and charm; **Spare Change** (Broderbund/Ap, At, C-64) is what the Zerks, creatures who've escaped from a coin-op machine, want to put in their bank before you, as the arcade owner, can corral all the tokens; **The Twisted Tale** (Trapeze/At) requires adventurers to keep their tongues firmly in cheek as they roam the abandoned campus in this satiric prose challenge.

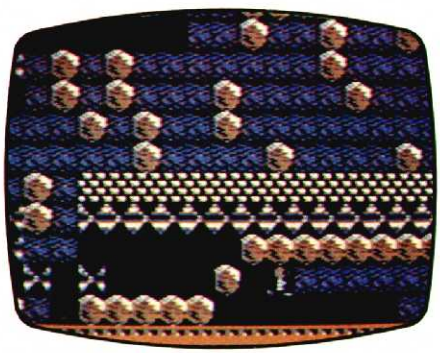
1985 BEST ARCADE-TO-HOME TRANSLATION

Definition: This Arcade Award recognizes the year's best home game translation of a program which previously reached market as a coin-operated machine.

Nominees: Dig Dug (Atarisoft/Most computers) comes to computer and videogame systems with the essence of its dig-your-own-tunnel playmechanic intact; **Joust** (Atarisoft/At, C-64), one of the few two-player coin-ops, is great fun even on systems that can't reproduce its fine play-for-pay graphics, and it's outstanding in its Atari and C-64 editions, which have topflight visuals as well; **Pole Position** (Atari/5200, At, C-64) gets the checkered flag for providing gamers with a variety of courses and lots of racing thrills: **Pepper II** (Coleco/C-V) is the home edition of a game which, somewhat unfairly, never achieved the heights of popularity in the arcades, but which took on new vitality in this excellent cartridge version; **Solar Fox** (Commodore/C-64) suffered from an image problem as a coin-op, but the home venue lets gamers fully explore its action-strategy possibilities; **Zaxxon** (Synapse/C-64) is totally reprogrammed from the first barrier onward and includes numerous elements which the original lacked.

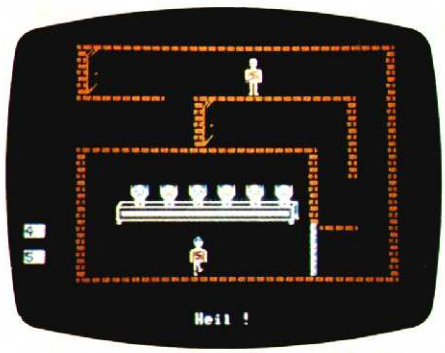


ZAXXON (SYNAPSE)



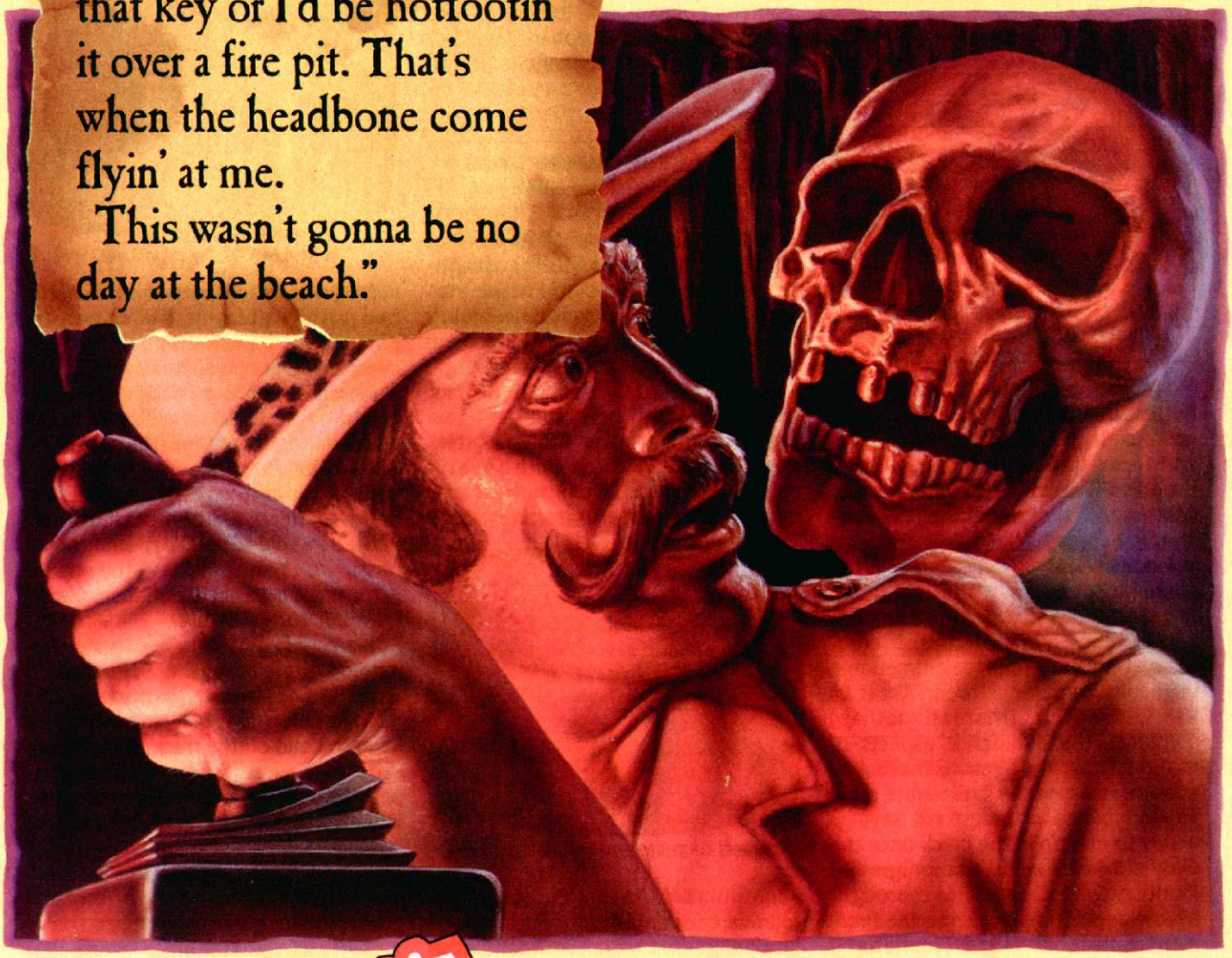
BOULDER DASH (FIRST STAR)

DROL (BRODERBUND)



BEYOND CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN (MUSE)

"I had to think quick—remember where I seen that key or I'd be hotfootin' it over a fire pit. That's when the headbone come flyin' at me. This wasn't gonna be no day at the beach."

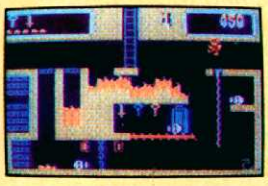


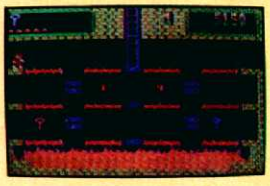
Montezuma's Revenge

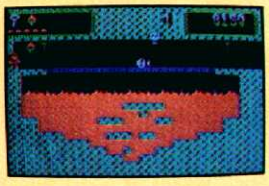
FEATURING PANAMA JOE

If you've got a mind like Einstein and reflexes to match, then Montezuma's Revenge™ is the game for you. It's a revolutionary game that challenges you to think *smart* and react *fast*. Join Panama Joe's™ search for buried treasure. Figure a way to get him over the fire pits. Behind the locked doors. Through a hundred* rooms crawlin' with critters. Get Montezuma's Revenge and get ready for action and adventure like you've never had before! Available in disc for Apple® II, Atari® Computers, Commodore 64,™ and IBM® PC & JR™; and in cartridge for Atari 2600,™ Atari 5200,™ and ColecoVision.™

PARKER BROTHERS







ColecoVision.

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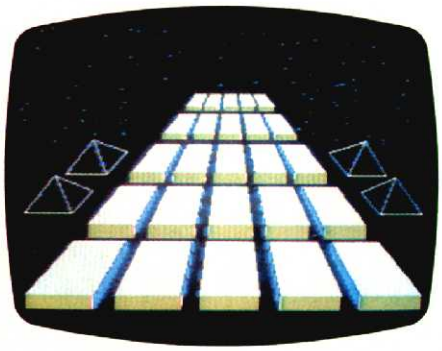
*24 Rooms in Atari 2600. **Parker Brothers is not affiliated with these companies.

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



SILICON WARRIOR (EPYX)

1985 BEST ELECTRONIC ACTION-STRATEGY GAME

Definition: Reflecting one of the hottest trends in software, this newly created award salutes the program which does the best job of combining the immediacy of a real-time joystick contest with the mental challenge of a strategy contest.

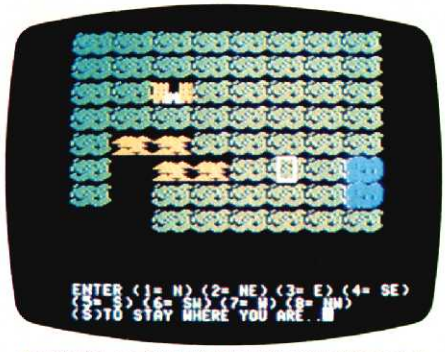
Nominees: Beyond Castle Wolfenstein (Muse/Ap, C-64) continues the saga of World War II's finest unknown secret agent, as the computerist must try to place a timebomb in Hitler's conference room; **C'est La Vie** (Adventure International/Ap) combines the avoidance aspects of navigating around a macro-maze with a money game in which Jacques must pay his bills and invest his savings wisely to end up in the black once the playfield is cleared; **Campaign '84** (Sunrise/C-V, C-64) is a thorough, action-oriented approach to the Presidental election; **Flight Simulator II** (subLOGIC/Most computers) is probably the closest thing to taking a pilot-training course in its simulation of the experience of flying an airplane; **Silicon Warrior** (Epyx/At) pits up to four players against each other in a contest to change blocks of color such that five line up horizontally, vertically or diagonally; **Seven Cities of Gold** (Electronic Arts/At) makes a riveting game out of exploring the New World in the age of Christopher Columbus — or use the continent generation system to set up some real *terra incognito*.

SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD (ELECTRONIC ARTS)

1985 BEST ELECTRONIC STRATEGY GAME

Definition: The Arcade Award recipient in this category is the computer or video software title which presents gamers with the most absorbing mental test.

Nominees: Fortress (Strategic Simulations/Ap, C-64) is an abstract contest in which horizontal and vertical adjacencies play a pivotal role; **Fortress of the Witch King** (Avalon Hill/Ap) is a quest in which the player explores a mysterious land while accumulating magic, money and followers for an assault on the tyrannical mage of the title; **Murder by the Dozen** (CBS Software/Ap, C-64, PC) presents 12 unsolved crimes which have taken place in the city of Micropolis which the computerist must solve as quickly as possible using deduction and intuition; **Murder on the Zinderneuf** (Electronic Arts/At, C-64) concerns a murder on a transatlantic dirigible which the computerists, as one of eight sleuths, must solve before the airship docks; **Trains** (Spinnaker/At) is an action-economic game in which moving raw materials and merchandise at the right time and to the right place can turn a humble computerist into a tycoon almost overnight.



FORTRESS OF THE WITCH KING (AVALON HILL)

1985 BEST MULTI-PLAYER VIDEO COMPUTER GAME

Definition: The winner of this Arcade Award is the program, videogame or computer, which offers two or more players the chance to participate simultaneously, either competitively or cooperatively.

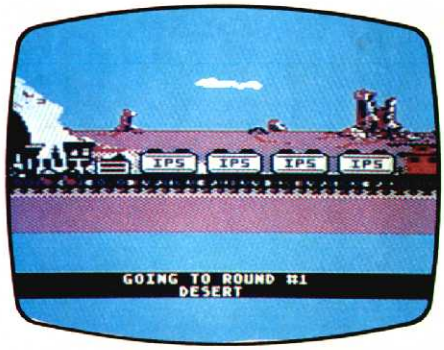
PARTHIAN KINGS (AVALON HILL)

Nominees: Jury Trial II (Basic/Ap) gives home arcaders the chance to be a prosecutor or defense attorney; **MIG Alley Ace** (Mirco Prose/At) employs a horizontally-divided display to present head-to-head air combat; **Monty Plays Scrabble** (Ritam/Ap) brings the classic word game to the home screen with numerous visual enhancements; **Parthian Kings** (Avalon Hill/Ap, At, PC) presents a war between two or more mythological nations; **Pitstop II** (Epyx/C-64) is more than just a sequel; it allows two racers to compete head to head on the track; **Rails West** (Strategic Simulations/Ap) returns players to the era of the robber barons, when fortunes were won and lost.

1985 BEST ELECTRONIC MONEY GAME

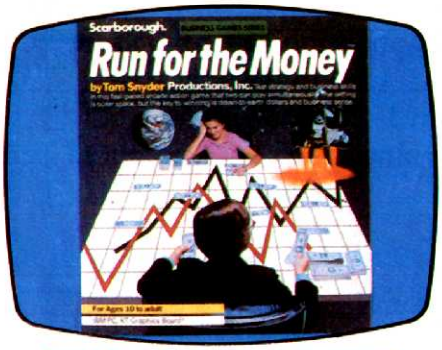
Definition: Honoring a popular gaming theme, this Arkie rewards the video computer program which simulates an economic situation most entertainingly.

Nominees: Baron (Blue Chip/Ap, C-64, PC) tests the computerist's ability to make a buck in the real estate business; **In the Chips** (Creative/C-64)



TRAINS (SPINNAKER)

1985 Arcade Award Contenders



RUN FOR THE MONEY (SCARBOROUGH)

provides a glimpse of the headaches associated with running a software outfit; **Millionaire** (Blue Chip/Ap, C-64, PC) throws the electronic investor amid the bulls and bears of Wall Street; **Run for the Money** (Scarborough/C-64) takes an action- strategy approach to the financial game concept, buttressed by exceptionally well-done visuals.

1985 ELECTRONIC WARGAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This Arcade Award goes to the best computer or videogame program which utilizes a military theme in a skill-oriented context.

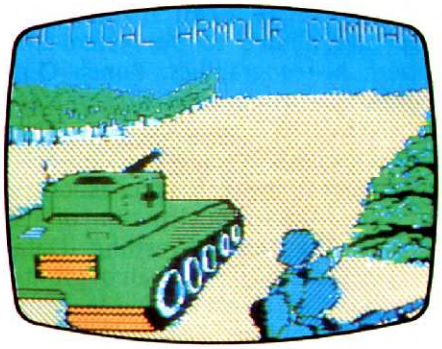
Nominees: Broadsides (Strategic Simulations/Ap, At, C-64) recalls the era of fighting sail; **Carrier Force** (Strategic Simulations/At) simulates the entire Pacific Theater of WW II on the tactical level with every ship, plane and base represented; **Operation Whirlwind** (Broderbund/At) leavens the strategy with fast action in its presentation of western front (World War II) land combat; **T.A.C.** (Avalon Hill/Ap, At) has high-resolution visuals to make its small-unit combat scenarios even more exciting; **RDF 1985** (Strategic Simulations/Ap, At, C-64), the latest in the "When Superpowers Collide" series, explores the ramifications of a hypothetical conflict over the Middle East oil fields.

OPERATION WHIRLWIND (BRODERBUND)

1985 ELECTRONIC EDUCATIONAL GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: Learning *can* be fun, and this Arkie recipient will be the game which best illustrates the point by combining fun and education.

Nominees: Agent USA (Scholastic/At) teaches states capitals while the computerist dashes around the country trying to thwart an invasion from space; **Math Mileage** (CBS Software/AP) is a reasonably painless way for youngsters to learn simple arithmetic operations; **Time Bound** (CBS Software/Ap, At, C-64) uses time traveling to give players lots of information about political, economic



TAC (AVALON HILL)

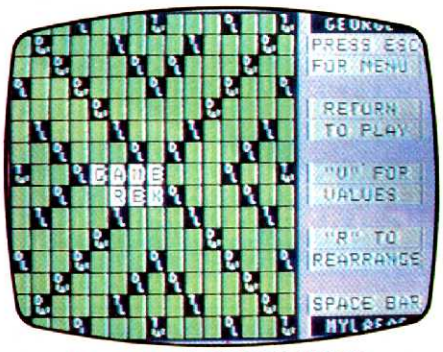
and social history; **Word Flyer** (Electronic Arts/At) builds word-recognition skills by testing young arcaders' ability to match a word with the same word as it flies past on the screen; **M-ss-ng L-nk** (Sunburst Software/Ap) is a clever switch on an old word game in which the players must attempt to complete words from fragmentary evidence.

STAND-ALONE GAMES DIVISION

1985 STAND-ALONE GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: This Arkie is bestowed upon the tabletop or portable electronic game unit which is highest in all-around quality.

Nominees: Mario Brothers Ce-



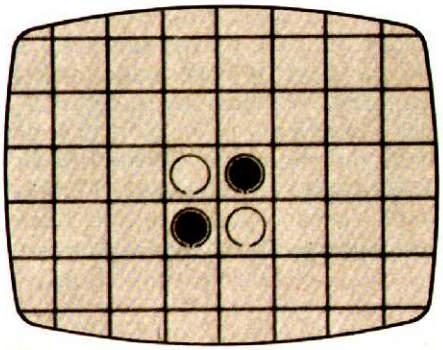
MONTY PLAYS SCRABBLE (RITAM)

ment Factory (Nintendo) is a mini-version of the coin-op in which Mario and his brother enter a new line of work that provides fun for gamers; **Monty Plays Scrabble** (Ritam) administrates and monitors the famous word-building contest; **Popeye** (Nintendo) focuses on the fistic battle between the spinach-eating salt and the dastardly Bluto; **Stargate** (Entex) puts the Williams duo-directional scroller at your fingertips; **Zaxxon** (Coleco) is a tabletop arcade that does surprisingly well at reproducing a tough-to-duplicate program.

1985 MINI-ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR

Definition: The winner of this Arkie is the hand-held, pocket or wrist game of the highest all-around quality.

Nominees: Miner 2049er (Tiger) is greatly enlivened by two display screens which present quite an obstacle course in color visuals; **BurgerTime** (Mattel) shows that building the perfect hamburger may be trickier than you thought; **Donkey Kong II** (Nintendo) is so sophisticated, it's almost possible to forget it's "only a hand-held"; **Pinball** (Nintendo) showcases silverball action in a multi-screen environment; **Reversi Master** (VZ Tech)



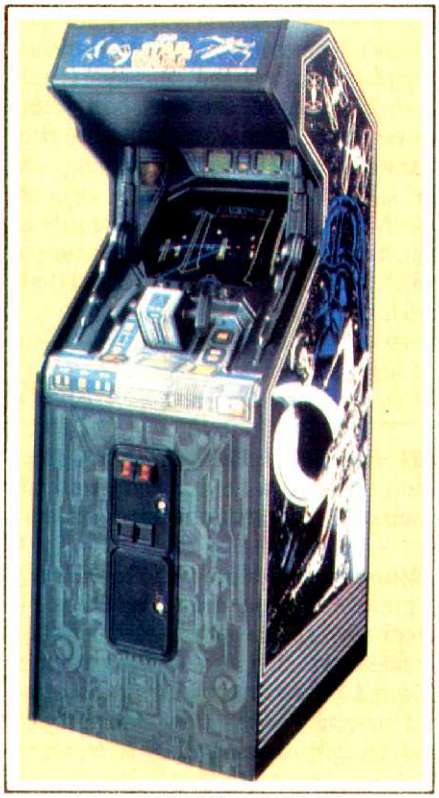
REVERSI MASTER (VIDEO TECH)

is a pint-sized machine which plays a tough and skillful round of the popular terroritory-grabbing game.

COIN-OP GAME DIVISION

1985 COIN-OP GAME OF THE YEAR

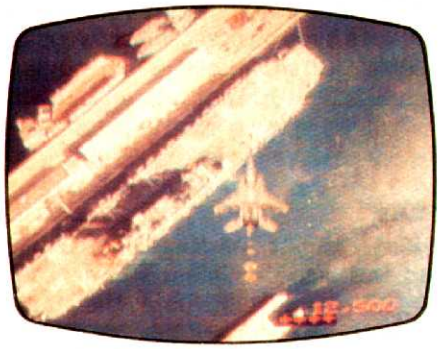
Definition: This category recognizes the outstanding coin-operated videogame machine which entered



STAR WARS (ATARI COIN-OP)

national distribution during the eligibility period.

Nominees: Discs of Tron (Bally) reprises the super-frisbee catch sequence from the movie; **M.A.C.H. 3** (Mylstar) puts the player in the cockpit of a fighter/bomber; **Spy Hunter** (Bally) is a throwback to the glory days of chase-and-shoot epics, enhanced with excellent graphics; **Star Wars** (Atari) is a multi-scenario gaming version of the popular movie; **Track and Field** (Konami) is an electronic simulation of Olympic-style athletic events—a particularly timely subject now.



M.A.C.H. 3 (MYLSTAR)

1985 MOST INNOVATIVE COIN-OP GAME

Definition: The winner of this Arkie is the game which introduces the year's freshest idea, concept or execution in the field of coin-op videogames.

Nominees: Crossbow (Exidy) combines the branching play-mechanic, a novel control system and superb hi-res graphics; **Punch Out** (Nintendo) introduced first-person perspective to boxing contests; **Star Rider** (Williams) is nearly as notable for its fast-paced flying /driving action as for the unique construction of its cabinet; **Tag Team Wrestling** (Data East) includes such essentials of grunt-and-groan as illegal double-teaming and foreign objects; **Tapper** (Bally) intended originally for tavern locations, now has an arcade counterpart in **Root Beer Tapper**, both of which are eligible as an entry.

1985 BEST COIN-OP AUDIO-VISUAL EFFECTS

Definition: The best visual and sonic enhancements win a game the Arcade Award in this category.

Nominees: Crystal Castles (Atari) is a three-dimensional maze game that includes such touches as an invisible hat; **Elevator Action** (Taito) is a stylish jumping and climbing contest; **Inter Stellar** (Funei) provides a fantasy world as setting for lots of flying and shooting excitement; **Mr. Do's Wild Ride** (Universal) reprises the durable character in an amusement park setting; **TX-1** (Atari) is a multi-monitor, multi-course racing game.

So, mark your ballots now and return them promptly to EG.

HERE IS YOUR BALLOT FOR THE 1985 ARCADE AWARDS

Please mark your choices in each of the categories by checking the appropriate box. Feel free to skip any categories where you are unfamiliar with most of the new games. A photo copy of this ballot will be acceptable if you don't want to damage your copy of *Electronic Games*. Deadline for Entries: October 15, 1984

COMPUTER GAME DIVISION

Computer Game of the Year

- ☐ Jack Attack *(Commodore)*
- ☐ The Heist *(Micro Lab)*
- ☐ Oil's Well *(Sierra On-Line)*
- ☐ One on One *(Electronic Arts)*
- ☐ Ultima III *(Origin)*

Best Computer Sports Game

- ☐ HESGames 84 *(HesWare)*
- ☐ Ringside Seat *(SSI)*
- ☐ Rally Speedway *(Adventure Int'l)*
- ☐ Starleague Baseball *(Gamestar)*
- ☐ Statis Pro Baseball *(Avalon Hill)*
- ☐ Summer Games *(Epyx)*

Best Computer Adventure

- ☐ Dallas Quest *(DataSoft)*
- ☐ Enchanter *(Infocom)*
- ☐ Gateway to Apshai *(Epyx)*
- ☐ Infidel *(Infocom)*
- ☐ Mabel's Mansion *(Datamost)*
- ☐ Questron *(SSI)*
- ☐ Wizardry III: Legacy of Llylgamyn *(Sir-Tech)*

Best Computer Action Game

- ☐ Blue Max *(Synapse)*
- ☐ Bruce Lee *(Datasoft)*
- ☐ Juice! *(Tronix)*
- ☐ Space Taxi *(Muse)*
- ☐ The Spy Strikes Back *(Penguin)*
- ☐ Zeppelin *(Synapse)*

Best Computer Game Audio-Visual Effects

- ☐ Bristles *(First Star)*
- ☐ Bugaboo *(Quicksilva)*
- ☐ Demon Attack *(Imagic)*
- ☐ Flip & Flop *(First Star)*
- ☐ Pharaoh's Pyramid *(Master Control)*
- ☐ Rootin' Tootin' *(HesWare)*

VIDEOGAME DIVISION

Videogame of the Year

- ☐ Ballblazer *(Atari-Lucasfilm)*
- ☐ Frogger II *(Parker Bros.)*
- ☐ Gust Buster *(Sunrise)*
- ☐ Q*bert *(Parker Bros.)*
- ☐ Space Shuttle *(Activision)*

Best Action Videogame

- ☐ Buck Rogers *(Sega, Coleco)*
- ☐ Bump 'n' Jump *(Sega)*
- ☐ Centipede *(Atarisoft)*
- ☐ Robot Tank *(Activision)*
- ☐ Robotron *(Atarisoft)*

Best Sports Videogame

- ☐ Baseball *(Coleco)*
- ☐ RealSports Baseball *(Atari)*
- ☐ Decathlon *(Activision)*
- ☐ Football *(Coleco)*
- ☐ Pitstop *(Epyx)*
- ☐ RealSports Soccer *(Atari)*

Best Adventure Videogame

- ☐ H.E.R.O. *(Activision)*
- ☐ Montezuma's Revenge *(Parker Bros.)*
- ☐ Pitfall! II *(Activision)*
- ☐ Quest for Quintana Roo *(Sunrise)*
- ☐ Tutenkham *(Parker Bros.)*

Best Videogame Audio-Visual Effects

- ☐ Battlezone *(Atari)*
- ☐ Congo Bongo *(Sega)*
- ☐ Dragonfire *(Imagic)*
- ☐ Squish 'Em *(Interphase)*
- ☐ Star Gate *(Atarisoft)*

COMPUTER VIDEOGAME DIVISION

Science Fiction-Fantasy Video Computer Game of the Year

- ☐ Dragonriders of Pern *(Epyx)*
- ☐ Rescue on Fractalus *(Atari-Lucasfilm)*
- ☐ Star Wars *(Parker Bros.)*
- ☐ Rug Rider *(Int'l Tri Micro)*
- ☐ Titan Empire *(Muse)*
- ☐ Zombies *(Bram)*

Best Entertainment Software Program

- ☐ Aerobics *(Spinnaker)*
- ☐ Biofeedback *(HesWare)*
- ☐ Dancing Feats *(Softsync)*
- ☐ MovieMaker *(Reston)*
- ☐ Songwriter *(Scarborough)*
- ☐ Windows to the Galaxies *(Commodore)*

Most Innovative Entertainment Software

- ☐ Amazon *(Trillium)*
- ☐ Bannercatch *(Spinnaker)*
- ☐ Cell Defense *(HesWare)*

Most Innovative Entertainment Software/Cont.

- ☐ Lifespan *(Trapeze)*
- ☐ Little Red Riding Hood *(Playground)*
- ☐ World's Greatest Baseball Game *(Epyx)*

Most Humorous Video Computer Game

- ☐ Boulder Dash *(First Star)*
- ☐ Bouncing Kamungas *(Penguin)*
- ☐ Drol *(Broderbund)*
- ☐ Quest for Tires *(Sierra On-Line)*
- ☐ Spare Change *(Broderbund)*
- ☐ The Twisted Tale *(Trapeze)*

Best Arcade-to-Home Translation

- ☐ Dig Dug *(Atarisoft)*
- ☐ Joust *(Atarisoft)*
- ☐ Pepper II *(Coleco)*
- ☐ Pole Position *(Atari)*
- ☐ Solar Fox *(Commodore)*
- ☐ Zaxxon *(Synapse)*

Best Electronic Action-Strategy Game

- ☐ Beyond Castle Wolfenstein *(Muse)*
- ☐ C'est La Vie *(Adventure Int'l)*
- ☐ Campaign '84 *(Sunrise)*
- ☐ Flight Simulator II *(subLOGIC)*
- ☐ Silicon Warrior *(Epyx)*
- ☐ Seven Cities of Gold *(Electronic Arts)*

Best Electronic Strategy Game

- ☐ Fortress *(SSI)*
- ☐ Fortress of the Witch King *(Avalon Hill)*
- ☐ Murder by the Dozen *(CBS)*
- ☐ Murder on the Zinderneuf *(Electronic Arts)*
- ☐ Trains *(Spinnaker)*

Best Multi-Player Video Computer Game

- ☐ Jury Trial II *(Basic)*
- ☐ MIG Alley Ace *(Micro Prose)*
- ☐ Monty Plays Scrabble *(Ritam)*
- ☐ Parthian Kings *(Avalon Hill)*
- ☐ Pitstop II *(Epyx)*
- ☐ Rails West *(SSI)*

Best Electronic Money Game

- ☐ Baron *(Blue Chip)*
- ☐ In the Chips *(Creative)*
- ☐ Millionaire *(Blue Chip)*
- ☐ Run for the Money *(Scarborough)*

Electronic Wargame of the Year

- ☐ Broadsides *(SSI)*
- ☐ Carrier Force *(SSI)*
- ☐ Operation Whirlwind *(Broderbund)*
- ☐ T.A.C. *(Avalon Hill)*
- ☐ RDF 1985 *(SSI)*

Electronic Educational Game of the Year

- ☐ Agent USA *(Scholastic)*
- ☐ Math Mileage *(CBS)*
- ☐ M-ss-ng L-nk *(Sunburst)*
- ☐ Time Bound *(CBS)*
- ☐ Word Flyer *(Electronic Arts)*

STAND-ALONE GAMES DIVISION

Stand-Alone Game of the Year

- ☐ Mario Brothers Cement Factory *(Nintendo)*
- ☐ Monty Plays Scrabble *(Ritam)*
- ☐ Popeye *(Nintendo)*
- ☐ Stargate (Entex)
- ☐ Zaxxon *(Coleco)*

Mini-Arcade Game of the Year

- ☐ Miner 2049er *(Tiger)*
- ☐ BurgerTime *(Mattel)*
- ☐ Donkey Kong II *(Nintendo)*
- ☐ Pinball *(Nintendo)*
- ☐ Reversi Master *(VZ Tech)*

COIN-OP GAME DIVISION

Coin-Op Game of the Year

- ☐ Discs of Tron *(Bally)*
- ☐ M.A.C.H. 3 *(Mylstar)*
- ☐ Spy Hunter *(Bally)*
- ☐ Star Wars *(Atari)*
- ☐ Track and Field *(Konami)*

Most Innovative Coin-Op Game

- ☐ Crossbow *(Exidy)*
- ☐ Punch Out *(Nintendo)*
- ☐ Star Rider *(Williams)*
- ☐ Tag Team Wrestling *(Data East)*
- ☐ Tapper *(Bally)*
- ☐ Root Beer Tapper *(Bally)*

Best Coin-Op Audio-Visual Effects

- ☐ Crystal Castles *(Atari)*
- ☐ Elevator Action *(Taito)*
- ☐ Inter Stellar *(Funei)*
- ☐ Mr. Do's Wild Ride *(Universal)*
- ☐ TX-! *(Atari)*

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS OCTOBER 15, 1984

Three ways to

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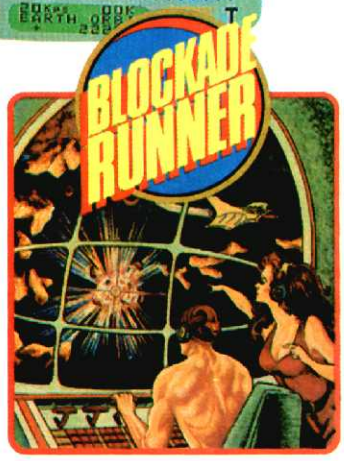

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...meet Fred and Ed, superbly animated, cartoon quality oilmen called in to fix the pipes.

...sure to be the game of the decade.

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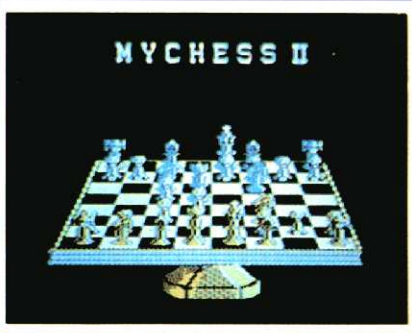
BREAKDANCE (EPYX)



MYCHESS II (DATAMOST)

MORETA: DRAGONLADY OF PERN (EPYX)

EG's FOURTH ANNUAL FALL SOFTWARE PREVIEW

A Compendium of Forthcoming Games

By THE EDITORS OF ELECTRONIC GAMES

What this year's crop of new games lacks in quantity, it more than makes up for in variety. Last winter, many software publishers seemed bent on finding out how many games in such popular genres as maze-chase, climbing and jumping, color changing and shoot-'em-up the public would accept before dying of boredom. Titles scheduled to reach market this fall and winter display and unparalleled diversity of approach and subject matter. Experiencing the desperate competition which occurs when a dozen companies attempt to exploit the same game-category at the same time has convinced many manufacturers that only distinctive, even unique, programs have the best potential.

Quality is not an issue. Advances in programming, especially on newer systems like the Commodore 64 and IBM PCjr, combined with continued hardware progress make computer game and entertainment software better than ever. There's certainly no shortage of bad games, but improved sound, graphics and memory greatly enhance the best titles.

Because of the six-to-12-month period needed to develop a new game, this is the first batch of titles produced in the wake of the events which shook electronic gaming in 1983. Accordingly, the new entries reflect the passing of the Videogame Era and the dawning of the Computer Game Age. The most obvious consequence is that videogamers will be choosing from among dozens, rather than hundreds, of new cartridges, but the nature of the programs themselves has changed, too.

The mainstay of videogaming is the joystick-and-button action game. Created to take into account the hardware's graphic, memory and command control limitations, videogames generally use real-time movement and a simple play-routine that tests physical ability more severely than brainpower. Action videogames have mutated into computer action games, which challenge mental as well as physical competance with more complex situations and play-mechanics.

And action contests don't dominate computing the way they do videogaming. Strategy, adventure, sports and educational games make up 60% of software sales. Clearly, computerists are most attracted by games which avoid reliance upon an older player's diminishing motor skills.

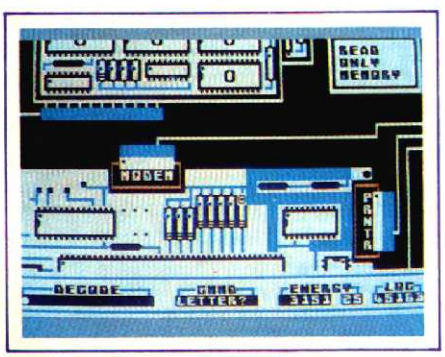
On the other hand, the videogame sensibility has strongly affected the design of computer games. Action-adventures and action-strategy games are faster-paced and more exciting than the traditional forms developed by computer programmers prior to the 1981-1982 videogame boom.

The range of game themes has never been wider. Science fiction and fantasy still inspire many programs, but many more encompass original concepts ranging from mystery and suspense to the exploration of unknown lands. Improved visuals have reduced designers' dependency on a few easily produced icons like tie-fighters, and expanded memory makes it possible to simulate more sophisticated realities in game form.

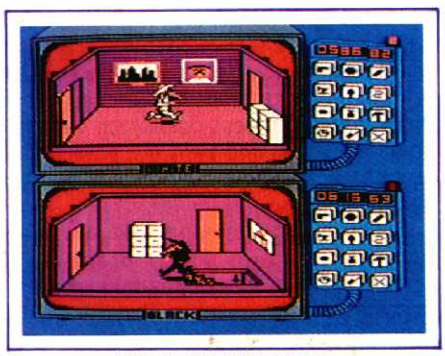
Educational computer games and entertainment software are two categories which are marching to different drummers. Both are new areas, and publishers are still learning the basic lessons. There's lots of innovative stuff in both areas, but each manufacturer is so anxious to cover all the basics that there's a potential for plenty of similar items landing on store shelves at roughly the same time. Last winter there were too many climbing contests and scrolling shoot-outs, this year there may be a surplus of alphabet tutorials, spelling games and playlet creation systems. If too many titles are forced to compete for survival in these new categories, it could spell disaster for manufacturers with ambitious educational and entertainment software line-ups.

ACCENT ON STRATEGY

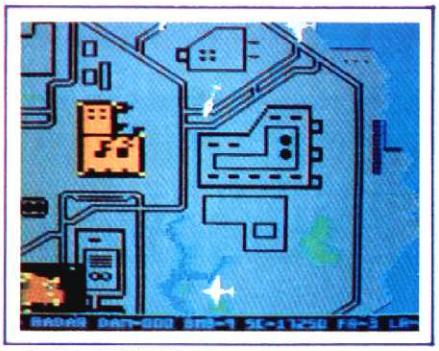
Everyone talks about the cultural connection between electronic gaming and popular music, but until now, one one has capitalized on the relationship. **It's Only Rock 'N Roll** (K-Tel/C-64, ColecoVision) is



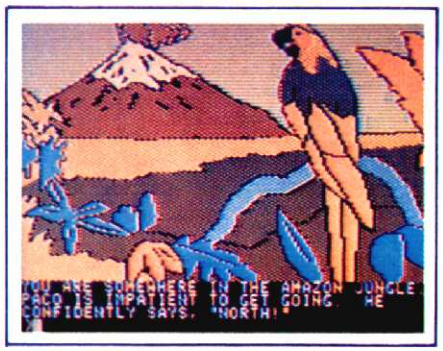
S.E.T.I. (TRAPEZE)


SPY VS. SPY (FIRST STAR)

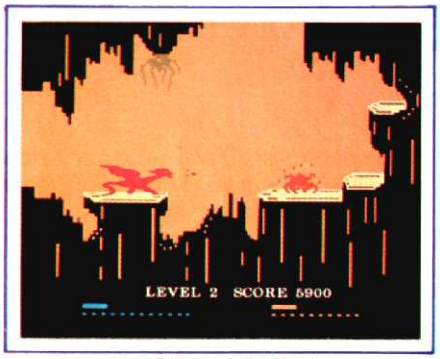
The offender is to be sentenced for the crime of shoplifting.
What information do you wish?
1. Offender's criminal record
2. Details of the crime
3. Offender's pre-sentence report
4. Review known facts
(Press 1, 2, 3, or 4 to choose)
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT (IMAGIC)



RAID ON BUNGELING BAY (BRODERBUND)

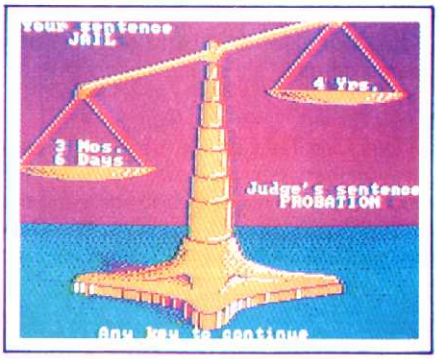


AMAZON (TRILLIUM)

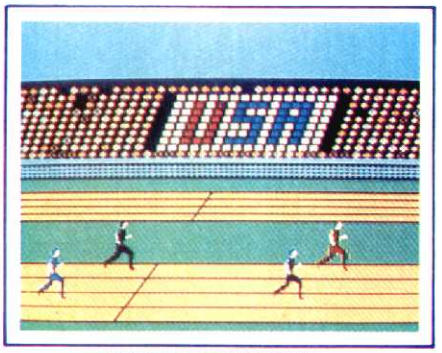


WING WAR (IMAGIC)

EARTHLY DELIGHTS (DATAMOST)



CRIME AND PUNISHMENT (IMAGIC)



SUMMER GAMES (EPYX)

a menu-driven strategy contest developed in the United Kingdom which simulates the struggle to lead a rock band to the pinnacle of popularity. The goal is to earn $1 million, 1,000 Happiness Points and three status symbols. After naming the band and receiving a computer-generated song, the player as bandleader must guide the group through tours, personal appearances, acquiring a manager, signing a recording contract and pushing tunes up the monthly hit chart. When your group lands a gig, the program can present a fully animated record of the performance. **Rock 'N Roll** (Spinnaker/Most computers) focuses on reproducing the experience of taking a rock band on-stage. Designer Tom Snyder, known to strum a guitar himself, presents a program which allows the computerist to do everything from arrange the music to arranging the floodlights.

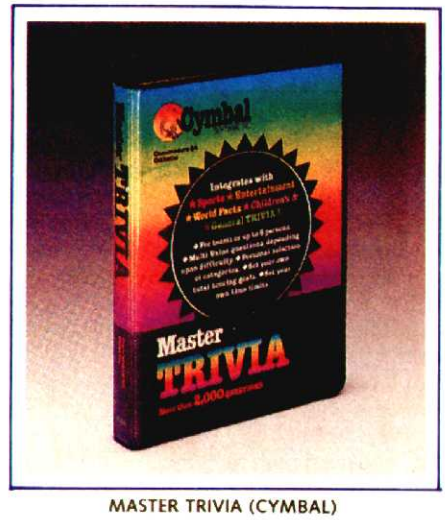
Bopping down the other side of beat street are **Breakdance** (Epyx/Apple, Atari, C-64, IBM PC, PCjr) and **Breakdancer!** (Screenplay/Atari, C-64, PCjr). The former is a three-in-one strategy program, while the latter is more in the action game mode. *Breakdance* asks the home arcader to mimic a line of on-screen dancers or create original dance routines, while the craze furnishes the background ambience for the Screenplay disk.

The rules of chess barely change in a century, but a year doesn't go past without some new wrinkles in computer chess. Hayden Software, publisher of the much-praised **Sargon II** (Most computers), plans to introduce an improved version under the **Sargon III** banner. This chess program is said to be capable of playing at a 2,500 level, which should make it a match for any human. **Mychess II** (Datamost/Apple, C-64) plays a solid game — on a virtual par with *Sargon II* at the highest skill setting, but its special features are what make it attractive to pawn-pushers. The computerist can choose pieces from among four different chess sets, custom-color the board and view the board from any angle in overhead and three-quarter perspectives.

Fans of code making and breaking games may enjoy **Super Brain** (ALA Software/C-64). The program keeps track of moves and times turns. The visuals just scrape by, but the key point in the game is, of course, wrestling with the codes.

Far and away the season's most exciting strategy game is **The Adept** (Electronic Arts/Atari) by Freefall Associates. This sequel to **Archon** draws some concepts from the original, but must be considered a separate game. Each player in this solitaire or head-to-head contest controls five adepts. These magicians can summon icons to capture and hold territory on the playfield, which consists of two squares linked by a narrow corridor. The four elements — earth, wind, fire and water — hold sway over different sections of the field, conferring or diminishing power as appropriate. The graphics are better than *Archon's*, making it easier to identify the pieces.

Seven Cities of Gold (Electronic Arts) seems to have touched off a small vogue for programs of exploration. **Viking Raider** (Interphase/C-64, ColecoVision) follows the exploits of Leif as he tries to restore freedom to the kingdom of Lavay. This fast-booting disk sports good graphics and a nearly unlimited range of strategic and tactical options. **Viking Raider**, like other programs in this emerging category, includes elements borrowed from adventure gaming which sharpen the simulation's impact. Veering slightly more toward action-adventure is **Explorer** (Activision/C-64), in which the player leads an expedition up a mighty river which is depicted on a mega-map that gets filled in on the screen as the



MASTER TRIVIA (CYMBAL)

party actually treks through it. The player pilots a spider-like craft which can leap along varied terrain and fire at oncoming attackers.

Pursuers of trivia shouldn't neglect the computer. **Trivia Mania** (Professional Software/Apple, IBM PC, C-64, TRS-80) requires a computer with a 64K memory. One to eight quiz contestants try to reach prearranged scores in five out of seven preselected information categories.

Cymbal Software may have the largest trivia game line. **Master Trivia** (C-64) lets up to six display general trivia knowledge. It also interfaces with any of five modules, each of which can also be played separately. The same outfit's **Entertainment Tonight** (C-64) bedevils up to six players

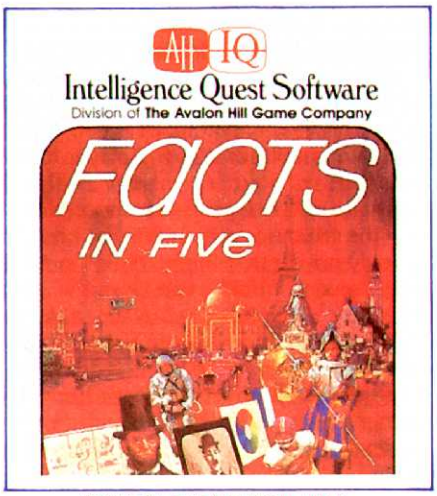
with 2,000 toughies.

The controllers packed with **Party Quiz** (Suncom/Apple, Atari, C-64, PC, PCjr) let up to four players race to be the first to punch the right answer to a series of multiple-choice questions. Avalon Hill's Intelligence Quest series has a program which might interest trivia buffs, **Computer Facts in Five** (Apple, Atari, PC). It's the computer version of a staple of A-H's family/social game line. **Trivia Arcade** (Screenplay/Apple, Atari, C-64, PC, PCjr) takes an action-strategy approach to the subject by letting the player pick a category by shooting at icons as they bounce around a playfield.

Likely to appeal to trivia buffs is **Jeopardy** (Coleco/Adam/Disk, Data pack), which is based on the long-running game show. High resolution graphics and a broad choice of categories make this a tempting trivia title.

There'll be at least one major science fiction strategy game making its debut this season: **Moreta, Dragonlady of Pern** (Epyx/C-64). The sequel to this year's Arkie nominee casts the player as Moreta, who must cure the mysterious plague. The graphics, in particular, are greatly souped up compared to **Dragonriders of Pern**.

Space Shuttle (Activision/Apple, Atari computers, Atari 5200, C-64, ColecoVision) seemed a mismatch with the 2600



FACTS IN FIVE (AVALON HILL)

audience when Activision released the cartridge. Now the game can finally find its proper home on the computer in this visually improved version of the orbital flight simulator.

S.E.T.I (Trapeze/Apple, Atari, C-64, PC) stands for "Search of Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence", but despite the trappings, this is essentially a dressed-up version of anagrams. The player roams through a broken computer, dodging energy packets while gathering up parts of a message from space which will otherwise be lost when the machine fails. As in anagrams, the player deciphers the message by shuffling the letters.

Capitalizing on the lighter side of mystery and suspense is **Spy vs. Spy** (First Star/

FAHRENHEIT 451 (TRILLIUM)

Apple, Atari, C-64), which is based on the comic strip by Antonio Prohias from *Mad* magazine. A horizontally split display shows the current position of each spy as they strive to be the first to exit the apartment complex and board the plane for home. Set traps to delay your rival and find tools with which to foil waiting snares. The graphics are beautiful — and true to the zany cartoon spirit of the Prohias' work.

Impossible Mission (Epyx/Apple, C-64) concerns the somewhat more serious mission of a spy who must search up to 30 rooms to find pieces of a block puzzle. Plusses include intelligible speech synthesis and a "construction kit" system for creating new playfields for this joystick-driven contest.

Ripper (Avalon Hill/Commodore 64) is a treatment of a long-popular theme: hunting down Jack the Ripper. **Crime and Punishment** (Imagic/Apple, PC, PCjr) is the first strategy game which looks beyond law inforcement to make an entertaining game out of the sentencing of convicted criminals. Designers Jack Kress, professor at the University of Delaware Law School, and Graeme Newman, Dean of the School of Criminal Justice, S.U.N.Y., have based this game on an exhaustive study of actual sentencing patterns: As judge, you must weigh the factors in the case and mete out justice which is neither too harsh nor too lenient. Performance is rated against the U.S. norms which the study establishes.

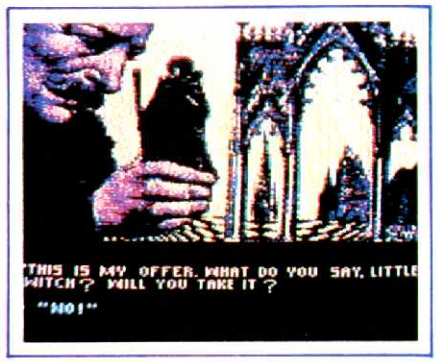
Word Challenge (Hayden Software/Apple) is only one of several good word game and puzzle programs on its way to gamers. The "Boggle"-like contest tests the ability to extract words from a grid of letters. Difficulty variables include adjustable gridsize. **Pathwords** (CBS Software/Apple, C-64, PC, PCjr) also concerns picking words out of a matrix. This time, the goal is to play a word which starts where the previous play finished.

Crossword Magic (Mindscape/Apple, Atari, C-64, PC) allows the computerist to compose a crossword puzzle — and then print out hard copy for subsequent solving. **Jigsaw** (Orbyte Software/Apple, C-64) brings the popular table game to the video screen. The program contains four pictures at each of four levels of difficulty.

The eastern front of World War II has inspired a pair of new computer wargames, **Objective: Kursk** (Strategic

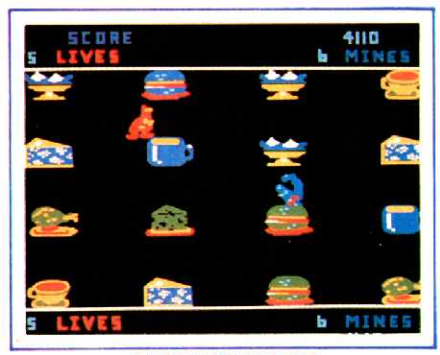
RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA (TRILLIUM)

KING'S QUEST (SIERRA ON-LINE)

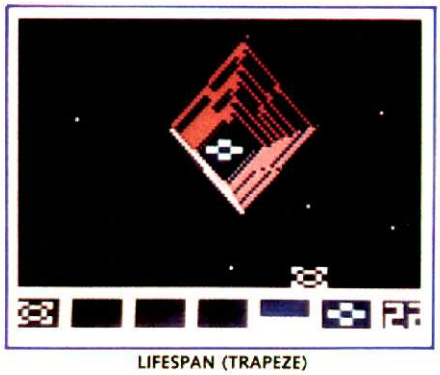


DIMIANO (IMAGIC)

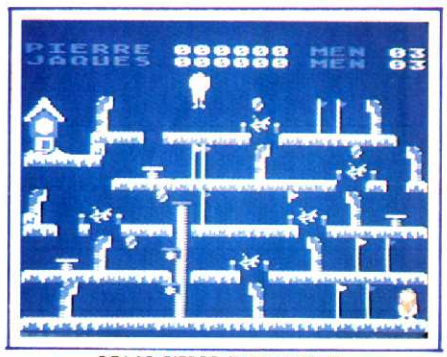
LASER GATES (IMAGIC)



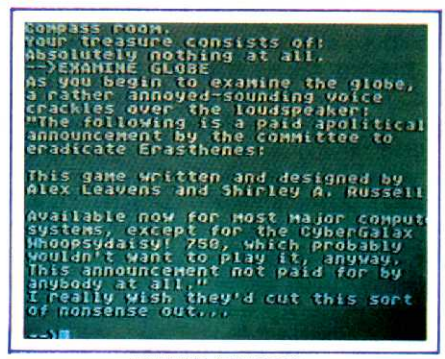
QUICK STEP (IMAGIC)



LIFESPAN (TRAPEZE)



POLAR PIERRE (DATAMOST)


Compass room.
Your treasure consists of:
Absolutely nothing at all.
-->EXAMINE GLOBE
As you begin to examine the globe, a rather annoyed-sounding voice crackles over the loudspeaker:
"The following is a paid apolitical announcement by the committee to eradicate Erasthenes:
This game written and designed by Alex Leavens and Shirley A. Russell
Available now for most major comput systems, except for the CyberGalax Whoopsydaisy! 750, which probably wouldn't want to play it, anyway.
This announcement not paid for by anybody at all."
I really wish they'd cut this sort of nonsense out...

TWISTED (TRAPEZE)

Simulations/Apple, Atari) and **Panzers East!** (Avalon Hill/C-64). The latter chronicles the 1941 German assault against Russia, while the former is a detailed simulation of Germany's 1943 Kursk offensive for one or two players.

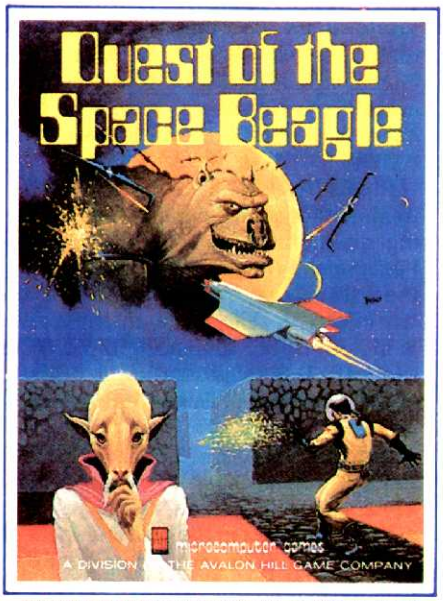
Strategic Simulations plans to add two titles to its acclaimed "When Superpowers Collide" series, **Baltic 1985** and **Norway 1985.** Both will be available for Apple and Commodore 64. **Reforger '88** (Strategic Simulations/Apple, Atari) is another "what if?" for solo or head-to-head play. The subject is a NATO defense of the Fulda Gap in West Germany. Fighting Sail is the issue in **Clear for Action** (Avalon Hill/Atari), which includes the option of custom-designed scenarios. **Raid on Bungeling Bay** (Broderbund/C-64) is an action combat game in which the player flies an airborne attack against the War Machine, a formidable tangle of interconnected weaponry.

Squire (Blue Chip/Apple, C-64, PC) is the fourth game from a specialist in financial simulations. The computerist can even pump real-world figures into the program to test the merits of actual investments. Real estate is the subject of a Coleco cartridge for Adam and ColecoVision which was still untitled at presstime. Players buy and improve various types of buildings and businesses by traveling around a map of a typical undeveloped area. Spinnaker's **President's Choice** is also a money game of sorts, in that the player must run the country well enough to stand a chance of re-election.

ADVENTURES AWAIT

Just when adventure gamers were starting to get restless about the seeming lack of improvement in their favorite type of computer software, the field looks like it's ready to bust out with all kinds of innovation. In fact, there's even an entirely new type of adventure game — the electronic novel. These programs emphasize roleplaying and plot advancement while going very light on puzzles, tricks and traps of the kind which traditional adventures have emphasized.

Amazon (Trillium/Apple) is the first outstanding example of the character-oriented adventure. Based on a script by Michael Crichton, it transforms the home arcader into a driven, hardbitten investigator out to solve a bizarre crisis. The same company plans a line of such games, all based on works of science fiction and fantasy authors. Two of the most intriguing titles are **Rendezvous with Rama** and **Fahrenheit 451,** both based on well-known science fiction novels.



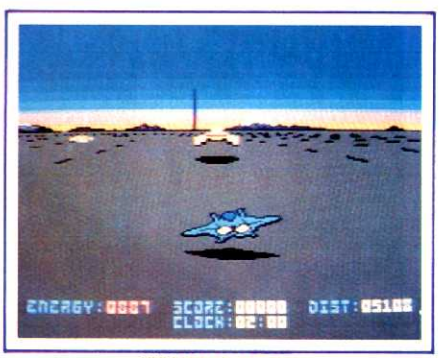
QUEST OF THE SPACE BEAGLE (AVALON HILL)

Windham Classics, a new line from Spinnaker Software, tunes the electronic novel concept for computerists aged 10-18. Available for Apple, Atari and C-64, the games are illustrated with high-quality cartoon art with dialogue in thought balloons. **The Wizard of Oz** and **Swiss Family Robinson** are the first two titles.

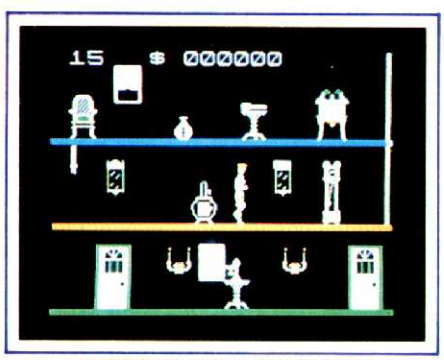
Kings Quest (Sierra/Apple, PC) is the most glorious fantasy quest published since **Ultima III.** Roberta Williams shines more brightly than ever with this program. It ties super-detailed, animated visuals to lots of meaty text with plenty of convoluted situations calculated to keep adventures thinking far into the night.

The Damiano Trilogy (Imagic) is an electronic treatment of R.A. McAvoy's trilogy. This joint venture between Imagic and Bantam Books asks the player to don the mantle of a witch in medieval Italy and vanquish Satan. Players can choose to follow the sequence of events in the books or — duly noting that the hero died in McAvoy's second novel — strike out in other directions. **The Holy Grail** (Hayden/Apple, C-64, PC) leads the player along the perilous path from peasant to high priest. This enhanced text adventure calls upon the gamer's own imagination for most of the audio-visuals, but when you pick up a map, book or the like, you can actually see it on the screen. ColecoVision owners should be glad to hear that Epyx is readying one of the finest action fantasy adventures, **Gateway to Apshai,** for that system.

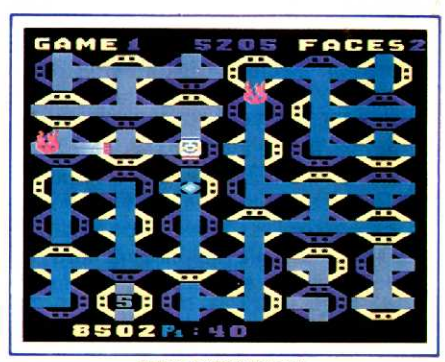
As usual, there aren't too many science



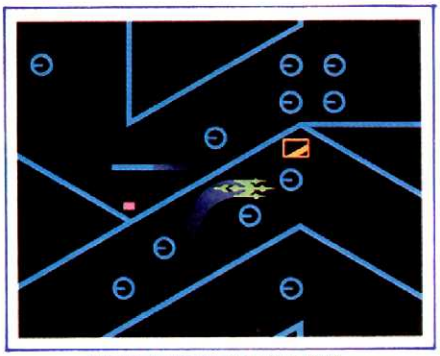
STEALTH (ATARI)



MABEL'S MANSION (DATAMOST)

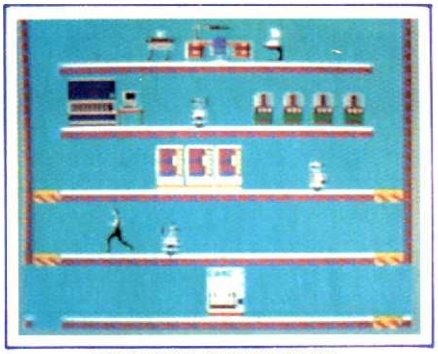


ZENJI (ACTIVISION)



ZONE RANGER (ACTIVISION)

ZONE RANGER (ACTIVISION)



IMPOSSIBLE MISSION (EPYX)

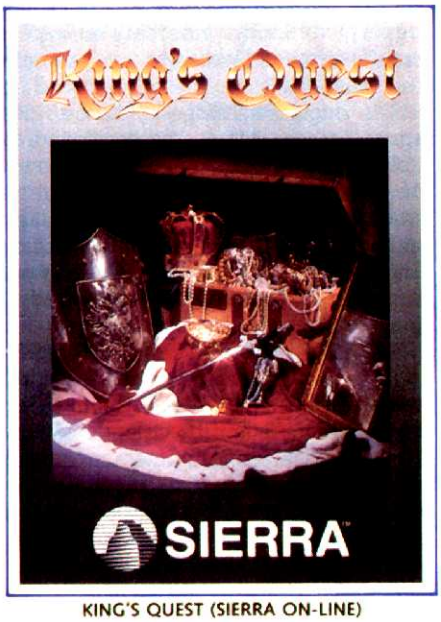
fiction adventures. **Quest of the Space Beagle** (Avalon Hill/Atari) is another multi-part adventure by Scott Lamb on the same lines as the author's previous **Jupiter Mission 1999. Robots of Dawn** (Epyx/C-64), based on the Isaac Asimov novel, straddles the line between science fiction and suspense. The text adventure is a murder mystery set in a future civilization far, far from earth.

Sherlock Holmes: Another Bow (Imagic/Apple, C-64, PC, PCjr) puts the gamer inside the skin of "The World's Greatest Consulting Detective." Holmes really has a fertile field, too, since no fewer than six crimes have occurred among the wealthy and famous passengers of a 1919 ocean liner. The appearance of characters such as Winston Churchill, T.E. Lawrence and Gertrude Stein makes the program even more enjoyable. **Earthly Delights** (Datamost/Apple) is a text mystery in which the player must find out who took the uncle's legacy — and why.

Impossible to classify is **Twisted** (Trapeze/Apple, PC) This text-only romp through an abandoned college campus is a parody — and perhaps a critique — of more seriously intended adventure games. Yet *Twisted* is more than just a joke; it's entertaining and playable in its own right.

Action adventures are virtually a category in themselves. If publishers have overloaded one type of game, it's this one. Some of the best coming our way are: **Montezuma's Revenge** (Parker Brothers/ Most computer and videogame systems), **Pitfall II** (Activision/C-64), **Mabel's Mansion** (Datamost/Apple), **Dragon's Lair** (Coleco/Adam, ColecoVision), **Spelunker** (Broderbund/Atari, C-64), **Robin Hood** (K-Tel; Xonox/C-64; ColecoVision), and **Castles of Dr. Creep** (Broderbund/C-64). The last-mentioned title is particularly noteworthy for being the latest by Ed (**Seafox**) Hobbs.

If that's still not enough, try "rolling your own" with **Adventure Master** (CBS) and **Adventure Creator** (Spinnaker). Both are slanted toward youngsters, but more mature gamers will like the ease of operation as well. And this is one way for adventure fans to maintain their habit!



KING'S QUEST (SIERRA ON-LINE)

JOYFUL JOYSTICKING!

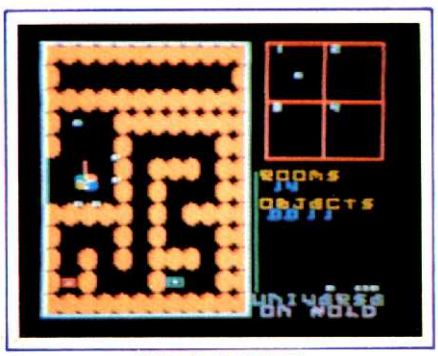
The most important news for many action game fans is that lots of hits will be appearing on some systems for the first time this winter. Important translations include editions of **Q*Bert** (Parker Brothers) for Apple and IBM PC; **Jack Attack** (Commodore) for Apple and others; **Donkey Kong Jr.** (Atari) for C-64; **Battlezone** (Atari) for VIC-20; **Boulder Dash** (Micro Lab) for Apple and ColecoVision; and **Mario Brothers** (Atari) for Apple. Atari's PCjr library includes **Ms. Pac-Man** and **Typo Attack.** Coleco promises it will have several of the promised "best of" computer software collections ready for Adam owners by this Christmas, and the Broderbund album should be a "must buy" for action gamers. Imagic will offer three of its fantasy videogames — **Wing War, Quick Step** and **Laser Gates** — on a single disk for the C-64. Sega's second effort with **Congo Bongo** on the Commodore 64 is worthy of applause. This disk game is unquestionably the best translation of the coin-op machine.

Home games and coin-ops are growing in different directions these days, and that, coupled with the generally low-profile nature of arcades, is leading to fewer translations. Parker Brothers will have **Gyruss** and **Mr. Do's Castle** for a variety of systems, Commodore's **Blueprint** should be available before this issue hits the newsstand, and Atari is packing **Pole Position II** with its new 7800 Pro System advanced videogame system. Atari plans to produce at least a dozen arcade-to-home translations for the 7800 within months of its debut. Some are already well-known to home arcaders, but others like **Galaga** and **Xevious** will be a fresh breeze.

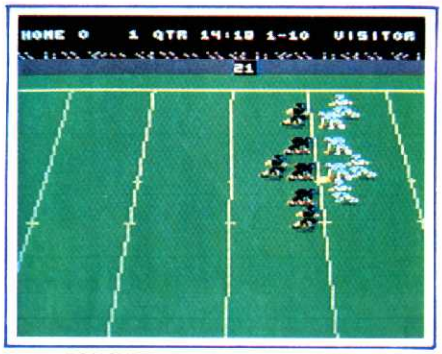
In the long run, however, it's games designed expressly for home systems which are apt to have the greatest impact. Typical of current trends in action computer games is **Polar Pierre** (Datamost/Atari). The object of this one- or two-player contest is to

SHERLOCK HOLMES: ANOTHER BOW (IMAGIC)

TOY BIZARRE (ACTIVISION)



ANKH (DATAMOST)

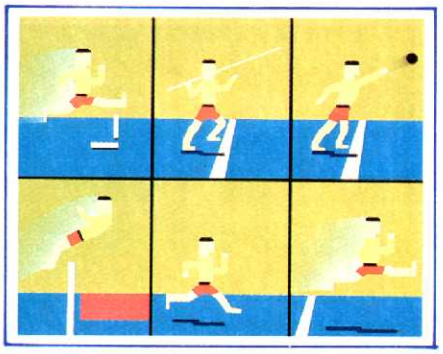


TOUCHDOWN FOOTBALL (IMAGIC)

TRACK AND FIELD (ATARI)

GRAND SLAM BASEBALL (IMAGIC)

THE TIME MACHINE (IMAGIC)



DECATHLON (ACTIVISION)

raise your flag on each of the 24 playfields. If two participate, a second hero named Jacques appears on the screen to help Pierre get the job done. **Whistler's Brother** (Broderbund/Atari, C-64) also has two characters on screen, but both are controlled by the same joystick-wielder. As the brother of an absent-minded archeologist, you must help him move around the playfield by whistling. The sound shakes the unworldly scientist out of his reverie long enough to get him to walk toward the brother's position. Finding a document of incalculable worth is the main goal of this jumping and climbing program. Sporting the same sort of wry humor is **Toy Bizarre** (Activision/C-64) a climbing contest by Mark Turmell. The on-screen hero rides conveyors and jumps on trampolines to search the playfield for prizes while avoiding attacks by greedy children.

Fans of **Loderunner,** the thinking gamer's action program, had better brush up on the nuances if they want to stand a chance against the 50 master-level playfields contained in **Championship Loderunner** (Broderbund/Apple, C-64). Designer Doug Smith warns that even experts may take several weeks to crack some of the situations.

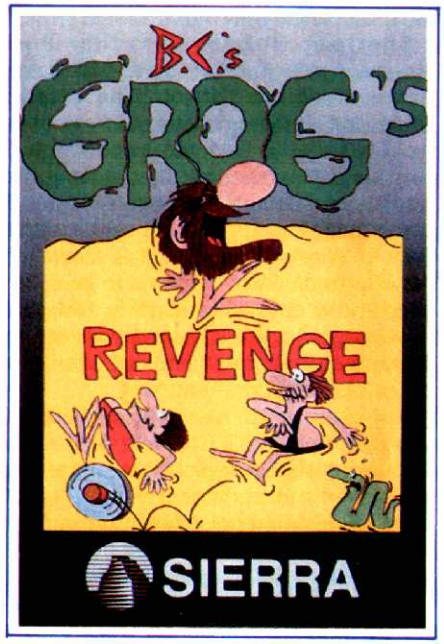
The original cartridge version of **Lifespan** (Trapeze/Atari) was developed for Roklan Software by John O'Neill a couple of years ago, but circumstances kept the landmark arcade approach to the passages of life from reaching national distribution. Trapeze has rescued the project and is bringing out the program with juiced-up graphics.

Large on-screen objects, sometimes filling as much as two-thirds of the display, come to the Apple in Broderbund's **Captain Goodnight and the Islands of Fear.** This lighthearted multi-screen mission sends the Defender of Freedom against Dr. Maybe. A hero of more ancient vintage stars in **Sir Lancelot** (K-Tel/C-64). Riding the winged horse Pegasus, the legendary knight must destroy flying beasts, fight dragons and save the fair maiden. The goal is the same, but the setting is vastly different in **Hideous Bill and the Gi-Gants** (Virgin Games/C-64). This multi-screen challenge asks the player to help Hideous Bill overcome his foes, the Gi-Gants and rescue Greta. How come aliens always kidnap women?

Some multi-phase games stress something more positive than blowing away everything within range. **Mercy Birds** (Broderbund/Apple II with 64K memory), for instance, sends the player on a critical rescue mission to save helpless desert creatures. **Camp Clean-up** (Activision/C-64) concerns picking up litter along a riverbank while occasionally pausing to save the odd swimmer. The cute graphics and relatively simple early rounds of play should particularly appeal to younger gamers. Activision is bringing **H.E.R.O.**, another mission completion game with good Samaritan theme to the Commodore 64. The game is somewhat upgraded graphically, but it's otherwise the same contest which debuted on the 2600 earlier this year.

If you like to laugh, you've got to have **Grog's Revenge** (Sierra/Most systems). This sequel to **Quest for Tires** is at least as varied and challenging as the original. It has the added bonus of even better graphics, which makes it even easier for the designer to embellish the basic plot with lots of humorous shticks.

Not that there's anything wrong with a good blastathon. There's a cathartic, some even maintain a therapeutic, value in just ripping loose and zapping the bad guys. **Zone Ranger** (Activision/C-64) is a good case in point. This multi-directional scrolling has outstanding graphics — and all the outer space battle action anyone could desire. **Eliot** (Alpha Software/C-64) pays homage to "E.T." with a young bicycling hero who pedals through the spacelanes as he atomizes alien attackers. **Time Machine**



GROG'S REVENGE (SIERRA ON-LINE)

(Imagic/C-64), on the other hand, is based on the antique science fiction of H.G. Wells. As the time traveler of the story, the player emerges from the time tunnel just in time to begin saving the Eloi from the Morlocks. **Stealth** (Broderbund/Atari, C-64) is a flying and shooting game with some elements in common with **Buck Rogers,** but which has better command control and a slightly peppier scenario.

Short Circuit (Micro Fun/Apple, Atari, C-64, PC, ColecoVision) has a dozen action-filled screens. Dave Schroedor, who authored **Dino Eggs,** presents a race to overload 12 microchips which are set to destroy the world. The player enters each chip in turn and, by transferring energy from one repository to another inside the chip, cause it to fail due to an overload.

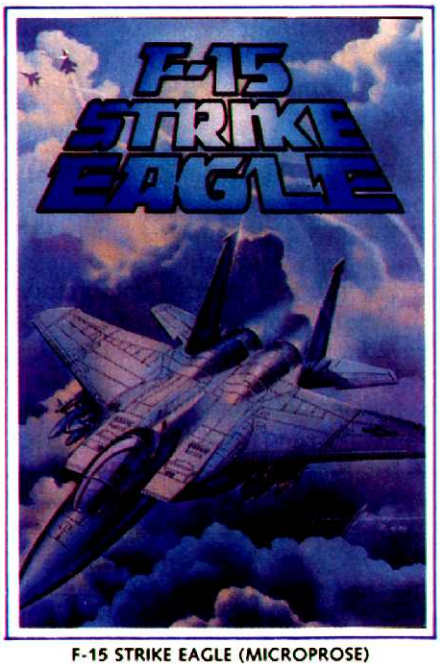
Station 5 (Micro Fun/Apple) is a four-phase mission completion game in which the player must fine-tune a reaction to

generate power, convey that power to an orbiting station and ultimately deliver it to waiting customers on Earth. Also concerned with the delivery of energy is **Super Pipeline** (Interphase/C-64). Sam has left the sewers and is now a supervisor in charge of getting the oil to flow through the pipes to the barrels at the bottom of the screen. A novel aspect of the game is that Sam uses helpers to remove the bugs in the system and get the crude flowing again.

Stressing the abstract side of action-strategy are **Zenji** (Activision/C-64) and **Ankh** (Datamost/Apple). Both test the player's ingenuity with a series of esoteric challenges which must be solved quickly as well as accurately.

FIGHTING CONTINUES . . .

Electronic wargames which are basically analagous to conventional millitary board-



F-15 STRIKE EAGLE (MICROPROSE)

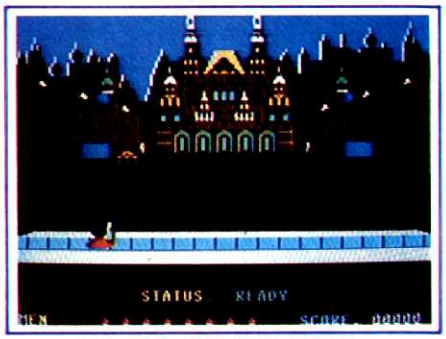
games are only half the story. There's also a steady steam of real-time situation with a war theme.

Raid Over Moscow (Access Software/Atari, C-64) upholds the honor of the company's earlier **Beachhead.** It's a multi-screen action-simulation of a retaliatory raid on Moscow in the wake of a Soviet nuclear attack.

F-15 Strike Eagle (MicroProse/Most computer systems) is yet another first-rate air combat program from this dependable source. This exciting combination of flight simulation and target shooting generates intense action.

SPORTS SPECTACULARS

The Olympics are history for another four years, but editions of many of the popular programs inspired by the quadrennial event are only now appearing for



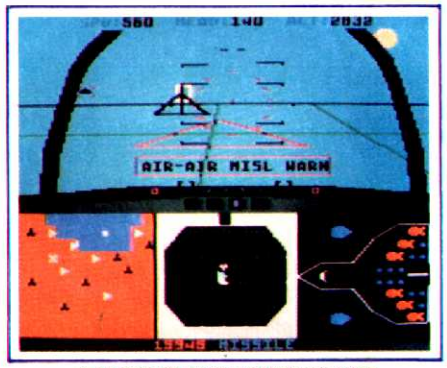
RAID OVER MOSCOW (ACCESS)

some systems. **Track and Field** (Atari), **Decathlon** (Activision), **Summer Games** (Epyx) and **HESGames 84** (HesWare) are all excellent — and they overlap less than you'd expect. The first two titles are heavier on running events, while **Summer Games** and **HESGames 84** stress other types of contests, ranging from platform diving to archery. Epyx may follow up its *Summer Games* success with a program called **Team Play.** It's a head-to-head game which consists of four team competitions such as tug-of-war.

Baseball games also appear to be enjoying a vogue at present. **The World's Greatest Baseball Game** (Epyx/C-64) really isn't but it's pretty good. The program includes both a statistical replay version and a joystick-controlled action contest. The graphics and animation are brilliant, though the movement of on-screen players in the action game seems a trifle pokey. **Grand Slam Baseball** (Imagic/PCjr) has three display screens and allows the computerists to choose whether pitchers and hitter will be lefthanded or righthanded. Datamost is reportedly developing a baseball game, probably for the Commodore 64, which will feature a diamond-vision-type scoreboard in center field.

Touchdown Football (Imagic/PCjr) includes such sophisticated options as blitzing, calling audibles at the line of scrimmage and half-time cheerleaders. The field is well-depicted in pseudo-3-D side perspective. Commodore is also working on a football game for the C-64. The project was still uncompleted at the deadline hour, but you can expect graphics to be roughly on a par with those for Commodore's stellar **International Soccer.**

And remember: This is only a round-up of the highlights.



F-15 STRIKE EAGLE (MICROPROSE)

Must-Have Games for Holiday Giving and Getting

Lots of the games described in EG's Fourth Annual Software Preview sound intriguing. The real question is. Which are the instant classics? The magazine's editors have reviewed programs scheduled for release this fall and selected an honor roll of 10 outstanding titles. While there are many other excellent games and entertainment programs coming during the fourth quarter — and let's not forget the established greats — these are the new entries which we predict will top want lists during the holiday season.

Here, in alphabetical order, are this year's picked hits;

THE ADEPT/Electronic Arts/Atari computers, C-64. This is the sequel to **Archon,** a 1983 Arcade Award winner.

AMAZON/Trillium/Apple. A Michael Crichton script powers this electronic novel in which the player must become an intrepid investigator.

ANOTHER BOW/Imagic/C-64. As the celebrated consulting detective, players must solve six baffling cases on an ocean liner full of famous people.

CAPTAIN GOODNIGHT/Broderbund/Apple computers. Large, animated graphics, machine intelligence and whimsey enliven this multi-screen mission completion contest.

DESERT FALCON/Atari/7800. This horizontal scroller combines the action of a shoot-'em-up with the strategy of an adventure.

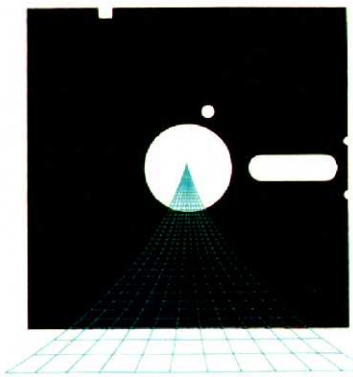
INCREDIBLE PENCIL/Activision/Atari computers, C-64. An actual on-screen pencil puts the lines and shapes exactly where you want them.

KING'S QUEST/Sierra/IBM PC & Jr, Apple. Sophisticated text combines with lush animated illustration to produce the first in a new generation of adventures.

RAID OVER MOSCOW/Access/C-64. This noble descendant of *Beachhead* provides an action-oriented approach to the strategy of WW II air warfare.

VIKING RAIDER/Interphase/Roam the world of the Norse explores in this fine action-strategy program.

WORD CHALLENGE/Hayden/IBM PC & Jr. Find the words buried within the letter grid in this fast-paced strategy contest.



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SOFTWARE SHOWCASE

LEGACY

Atari Program Exchange/
Atari Computers/Disk

One of the best-kept secrets in the videogame/computer software business is the fine work being turned out on a regular basis by the Atari Program Exchange, or APX. Here is an entire catalog of game software — some, admittedly, rather weak, but many which can look state-of-the-art square in the eye.

One of the finest examples of this product source is **Legacy**, a four-screen, strategy/combat contest with resolution so high it might give you a nosebleed.

The action begins with the menu screen, displaying a partially-folded map. Using the joystick to select one of four combat modes, begin by unfolding the map for a scan of the situation, placing the round targeting site over either a ship or an enemy base.

Next, select one of the three combat modes appropriate to your situation:

LEGACY (APX-ATARI)

torpedos, sea-to-air or land-to-air. If you target a ship while in the navigation mode, you must play the torpedo option. In this scenario, the player is captaining a variety of ships (one at a time, mercifully), all under torpedo assault. Using a sliding horizontal sight beneath the playfield's action "window", the object here is to avoid the oncoming water projectiles. The perspective is that of someone standing near the front of the vessel, watching the ship's bow rise and fall over the choppy waters. Incoming torpedos must be outmaneuvered and traced, visually or via scan, to their point of origin. Moving under a full head of steam, the gamer's craft must zip directly to that enemy sub and send it to the bottom.

Another challenge sends arcading pilots on a search-and-destroy mission along a breathtaking grid-matrix capable of four-way scrolling. Using another horizontally-sliding targeting device, missile launchers must be tracked along the crisscrossing grid and obliterated via the arcader's arcing death rays. Spend too much time engaged in this strike, though, and the enemy will begin launching nuclear missiles against the player's cities. In a last ditch attempt, the player can move to the final combat modes and attempt to wipe out the missiles as they slowly emerge from near the vortex and float toward the perimeters of the screen. Time to impact is still counting down through all of this and if a bomb makes it off the screen, the computerized scanner recalibrates and refocuses, allowing the human defender a second shot at saving his cities.

The graphics in this baby are *hot*. The clouds and seagulls in the torpedo scenario and the incredible computer casing surrounding the matrix battleground are so realistic you want to touch them.

With games such as *Legacy* and **Excalibur** floating around, Atari should be trumpeting the Program Exchange to the cheap seats. Instead, here sits a four-screen, fascinating "ultimate defense" riff held together with graphics so clean they must be seen to be believed, and nobody knows about it!

Legacy is one spectacular piece of software. Let Atari know what you think of it, and hope for more of these in the future.

(Will Richardson)

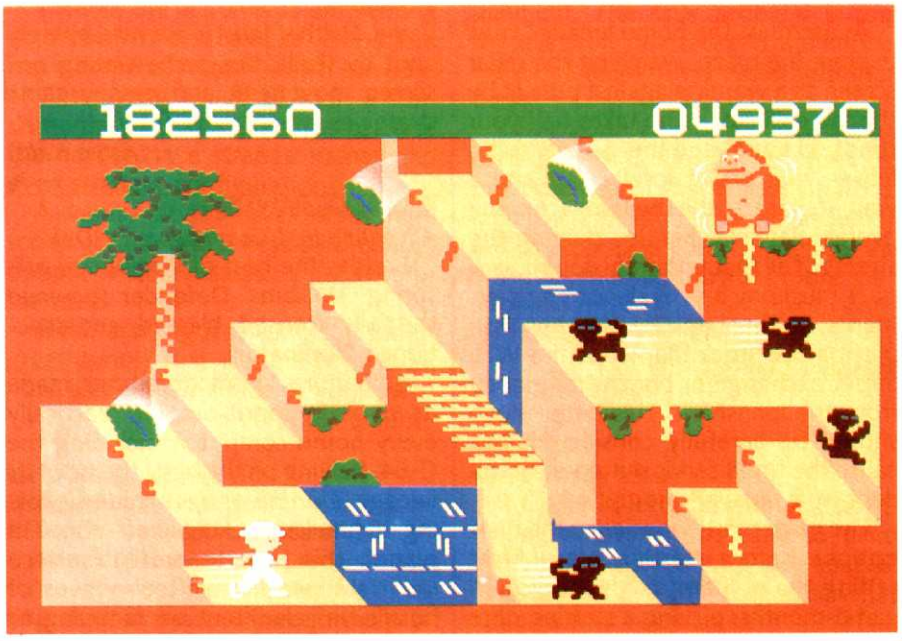
CONGO BONGO

Sega/Atari computers/Cartridge

It was understandable that **Congo Bongo** was a disaster on the Atari 2600. After all, with no little memory, it's hard to program a graphics-oriented game without sacrificing some of the visual element and play-mechanic.

But *Congo Bongo* doesn't fare much better on cartridge for the Atari computers. Like the 2600 edition, the coin-op's four screens have been cut to a mere two, and the cute opening sequence is gone as well. The visuals bear little resemblance to the coin-op game's lush jungle graphics, and the sound effects are decent but still inaccurate.

Compared to several other versions of this game, the play-action suffers only a little. In the first screen, the gamer has to climb to the top of a jungle plateau, avoiding nuts thrown by the giant ape Bongo, and keep out



CONGO BONGO (SEGA)

of the clutches of his chimpanzee cohorts. The second screen requires the jungle explorer to get across a river by jumping onto the backs of various water creatures, taking care not to land in their mouths.

Congo Bongo fans will find this a disappointing home edition, and those who never played the arcade game won't find much here to sustain their interest.

(Tracie Forman)

JUICE

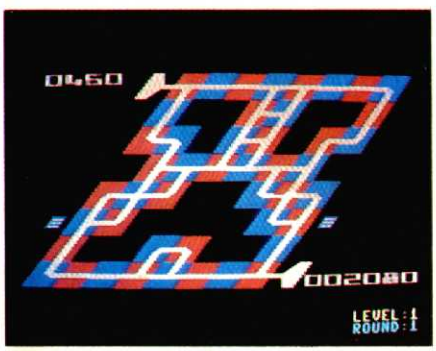
Tronix/Atari Computers/16K Disk

In **Juice,** players take the role of Edison, an android, who must complete the circuit connecting all squares of a gaily-colored grid. When the connection is complete, the board lights up and it's on to the next screen. Edison is constantly dogged by the wandering Nohms, which can eliminate him with a touch, and by the menacing Killerwatt, which chases him around the playfield.

While many feel that *Juice* was one of the first really good third-party games for the Commodore 64, there are better games of this type available for the Atari. The graphics are substandard, looking as if they'd be more at home on the Intellivision, and the sound effects are unmemorable.

In short, this version of *Juice* is unspectacular at best.

(Tracie Forman)



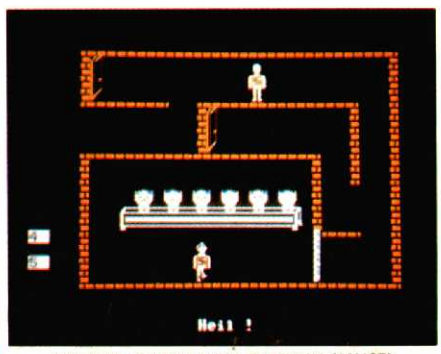
JUICE (TRONIX)

DEFENDER

Atarisoft/TI 99-4A/Cartridge

The planet is being invaded! Wave after wave of different alien craft threaten the player's civilization, and only the defender ship stands in the way of total annihilation. There are six varieties of alien ships, each of which has a different function and point value. The gamer's ship must destroy the alien craft while safeguarding the humanoids of the planet. The gamer has a choice of a one- or two- player game, easy or hard. To begin the game, the fire button is pressed; the plus (+) will end the game and return the player to the options screen. **Defender's** smart bombs, which destroy all the aliens visible on the screen, are activated by pressing the space bar. Depressing any other key will shift the Defender ship into hyperspace, to reappear at a random location somewhere on-screen. The gamer has three Defender ships and three smart bombs, but more can be obtained each time the player accumulates an additional ten thousand points. The 'P' key is used to temporarily halt game play. Pressing the 'P' again resumes play. Aside from the different control system which is actually quite specialized in the arcade version, the Atarisoft home version compares favorably. The joystick action is not as smooth, but this is to be expected in a different control system. So, Defender, prepare for the challenge!

(Joseph Pedreiro)
(Siobhan Stevens)



BEYOND CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN (MUSE)

BEYOND CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

Designed by Silas Warner, Eric Ace and Frank Svoboda III
Muse/Apple II/48K Disk

The best sequels offer something new while still reminding people of whatever qualities made the original popular. **Beyond Castle Wolfenstein,** which continues the exploits of the World War II hero who was last seen escaping from a Nazi fortress prison called Castle Wolfenstein, is a textbook example of how to turn a hit into a series. The newest disk is certainly similar to its predecessor in many respects, but the design team has provided a new scenario brimming with tactical options which didn't exist in the earlier program.

The focus of this action-strategy contest is Hitler's Berlin bunker. A resistance worker has placed a time-bomb in a closet somewhere on the first floor of the heavily defended complex. All the player has to do to win fame and glory is find the bomb, penetrate to Hitler's secret conference room on the third level, rearm the bomb and send the Fuehrer a dandy surprise from the Allies.

The authors have banished several aspects of **Castle Wolfenstein** which detracted from its overall enjoyability. *Beyond Castle Wolfenstein* starts quickly, eliminating the long preface which the original game incorporates directly into the code. There's also much less likelihood of a collision with a wall, and the entire screen doesn't go wild each time the hero brushes a doorway or wall.

The count-down locks which barred the chests in *Castle* are absent, replaced by combination locks that prevent the player from automatically searching many of the supply closets. Some may think this is tantamount to replacing a headache with an upset stomach. The system for figuring out the combination by trying one digit at a time and listening for tumbler clicks can take the gamer a little while to negotiate, but there are only 30 possible combinations for each lock, so even the maximum delay can't compare to waiting for a lock to count down from 200 or so in *Castle Wolfenstein.*

Donning a spare uniform to slip past guards isn't a factor here. Instead, the hero may collect passes and show them to any defender who orders him to halt for inspection. Too bad matching the correctly numbered pass — there are five different ones — to the guard is luck or memory, depending how many times you've played the current scenario. When the passes don't work, it is sometimes possible to bribe a guard — and flashing some money may gain information from one of the clerks who sit at desks in various rooms.

Tripping the alarm by arousing the suspicions of a guard changes the complexion of the game entirely. Suddenly, the hero must abandon stealth and shoot his way through an army of Nazis. A tool kit, if found and brought to the alarm center, may stop the dreadful clanging.

Bullet-proof vests have also vanished. Now one shot may not necessarily kill the hero, only wound him to some degree. Finding and using the first aid kit can restore full health.

Beyond Castle Wolfenstein is a fitting successor to the classic *Castle Wolfenstein.* And what compliment could be greater?

(Arnie Katz)

C'EST LA VIE

Designed by Gordon Eastman
Adventure International/
Apple II/48K Disk

The streets of Paris are lined with gold — or at least legal tender — in **C'est La Vie,** but there's a lot more to this game than just rushing around the macro-maze and picking up the bills as in the typical maze-chase. The chief attraction of this program is that it ties the usual labyrinth eat-the-dots action with the subtle strategies of a money game.

As Jacques, the home arcader must explore the maze, watching the radar screen as a warning against pursuit by the tax collector (who takes half your funds on hand) and the mugger (who leaves your wallet totally flat) and a way to locate the buildings on the overall playfield. Besides clearing the streets of all that unsightly dough, Jacques must pay bills by depositing payments at the bank or the hospital, playing the stock market at the Wall Street exchange or borrowing money from the loanshark. This latter move should be carefully considered, because the hood sends out goons if the debt isn't repayed promptly.

The gamer must consider a menu of options before starting play. After setting the duration of the session in game-months, picking a starting date and choosing a movement speed with the number keys, Jacques must be guided in such a way as to end up with a positive net worth when time runs out. Clearing a maze earns a $500 bonus, and play continues with maze after maze until the preset time limit is reached. It is very common to succeed as an arcader (by sweeping up all the bills) only to flounder as a strategist (by ending up as a money-loser at game's end).

Good artwork, bolstered by complex animation of the central character, is icing on the cake. This solitaire program offers the advantages of real-time action and the light mental stimulation of a family-social board-game. Neither facet is overwhelmingly hard by itself, but orchestrating on-screen movement and money-game strategies is tricky and fun.

(Arnie Katz)

ELIMINATOR

Adventure Int'l/Commodore 64/Disk

Besides the host of illegitimate offspring, Williams' **Defender** spawned the fully-licensed, blessed, and sanctioned **Eliminator.**

Adventure International has made its scrolling shoot-out for practically every home computer, including the C-64. Relying on the basic theme of its lineage, *Eliminator* has arcaders piloting a familiar-looking craft above a planet, this time to protect surface radar stations from fifteen waves of hostile vessels intent on ramming or shooting down the big E so that their special Deciso Destroyers can have a clear shot at the electronic snoopers.

Eliminating all of the enemy's landlocked incubators cuts off the supply of antagonistic ships and advances gamers to the next, more difficult wave. Losing a radar site blanks out an entire section of the view screen, making defense even tougher.

This has to be the most visually and audibly rewarding version of *Defender,* bar none! Five musical scores including the "1812 Overture" and Monteverdi's "Tocatta" serve as an audio reward for good play. Highly detailed, colorful enemy craft add a richness to the scenario.

ELIMINATOR (ADVENTURE INT'L)

Though the action is as unrelenting as that of its arcade-sake, *Eliminator* has a sense of humor which provides an interesting touch to such a fundamental shoot-out. This is so because the nasties have strange names and even stranger configurations.

A vanity board saves eight high scores to disk and a keyboard control option, while available, is not recommended.

Eliminator's got it all; good looks, great tunes, first class action. Enlist now, get an *Eliminator* of your own!

(Ted Salamone)

LAZER ZONE

Designed by Jeff Minter
HESware/Commodore 64/Cartridge

Attack of the Mutant Camels made some wonder if Jeff Minter was getting stuck in a rut. Although the program is a blast brigadier's dream, it bears a close resemblance to Minter's earlier **Gridrunner.** This title should silence any critics, because it presents a unique approach to shoot-'em-ups that owes nothing to Minter's previous successes.

LAZER ZONE (HES)

The command control set-up is what separates **Lazer Zone** from the pack. Moving the joystick to the left or right moves a cannon along the lower playfield edge, while moving the stick forward or back repositions the cannon that travels along the right-hand edge. Pushing the stick diagonally allows each gun to direct fire at the playfield edge along which the other moves.

This last is crucial, because much depends on being able to skrag incoming nasties which penetrate to one of the two baselines. Otherwise, they would then move along the track unmolested and destroy the cannon on contact.

The chief tactic is to establish a crossfire from the two guns which eliminates the horrible bug ships and the equally frightening skull ships as they float across the otherwise featureless playfield. The only problem is that there are lots of attackers, and knocking all of them out is easier said than done.

Lazer Zone also offers a two-stick control method, but it's not the most practical idea of the year. It's hard to hold two sticks and work an action button, too. Don't worry, though, the one-stick method provides more than enough target-shooting thrills to satisfy the itchiest trigger-finger.

(Steve Davidson)

POOL

Abacus/Commodore 64/Disk

It's been a long time since this reviewer has been inside a smoke- filled pool hall. Until booting up Abacus' **Pool** for the C-64, I'd forgotten what fun a rack or two can be.

Assuming prior knowledge of the game, *Pool* presents an overhead view of a green slate top set on a very blue background.

The menu screen and two-page manual spell out the game options and keyboard commands. Hustlers can spot the cue ball for break shots or after scratches, aim a shot by moving a small white cursor around the table edge, or view an instant replay of the last shot, all with just a few keystrokes.

Game choices include full-rack or nine ball. For practice sessions there is a repeat-the-last-shot option, while the F7 key shoots the cue ball in the prearranged direction. The longer it's depressed, the faster the ball travels.

Pool does not keep track of scores, number of players, or their turns. It's just as well, since this allows an unlimited number of gamers to get in on the fun.

The table interaction is remarkably lifelike because all the strategy of angle and bank shots can be used, though there is no way to put "English" on a ball.

As the balls bounce off one another, the audio effects sound just like real ivory crashing together!

One problem is that every ball is white, with a green numeral on it. Unlike the actual game, the numbers are always visible, even when the balls are rolling down the felt.

Beyond that, the fluid ball movement and gameplay make *Pool* downright addictive. All in all, this is a fine rendition of a classic form of entertainment. All the fun of the real thing — and you don't even have to endure any smoke.

(Ted Salamone)

ALLEY-OOPS

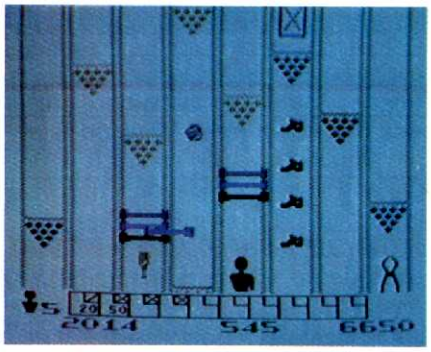
Artworx/Commodore 64/Disk

Alley-Oops is a variation of the staple slide and shoot contests. Instead of repelling some form of invading alien, insect, or unidentifiable blob, home computerists engage in alley action—bowling, to those not in the know!

Gamers control a video alter ego who travels along the bottom of eight lanes, wraps around screen edges, and hurls numerous balls in a rapid fire motion. No need to worry about foul lines here!

Home arcaders must knock out the pinsets and collect the spares and strikes behind them, while avoiding deadly pin sets, pinsweeps, shoes, overgrown pins, gum spots, and hurtling beer bottles.

Passing over the symbols adds them to the on-screen scorecard. Filling the card with ten scores completes the round and registers the scores and appropriate bonus to the game score.



ALLEY-OOPS (ARTWORX)

Getting hit by a nasty costs a game life and resets the current scorecard to zero, thus restarting each round in which a life is lost.

Snaring the trophy which occasionally wanders down the lanes eliminates all of the nasties and automatically credits the scorecard frames with all visible point symbols. Difficulty increases not only from level to level, but also within each scenario as the score increases.

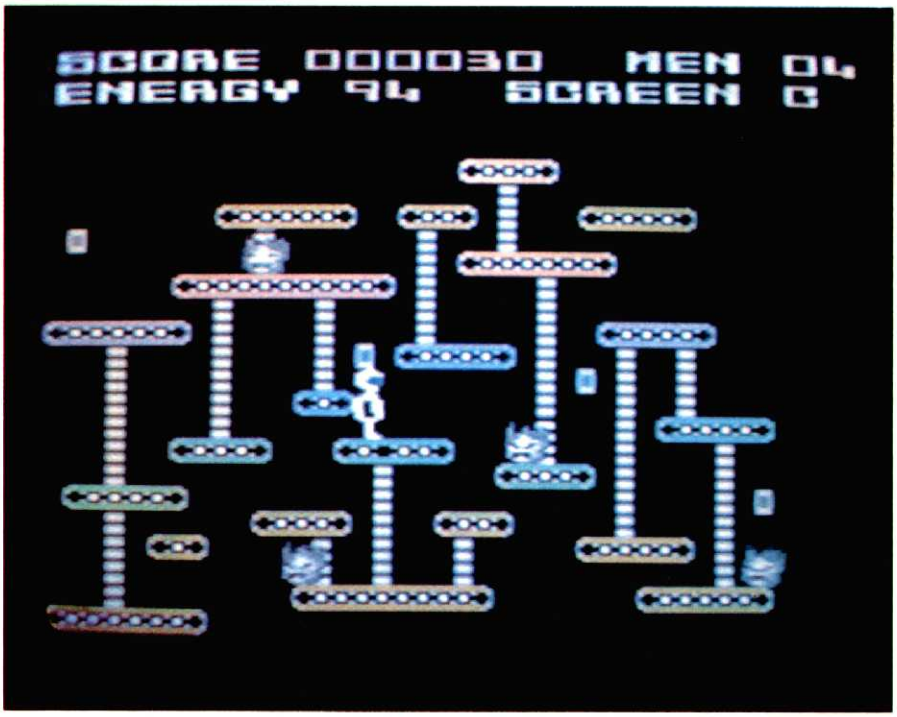
Though *Alley-Oops* sports a nice mix of adversaries and provides increasingly challenging play, the visuals and audio effects are run-of-the-mill. This Artworx effort for the C-64 is fun for a while, but it brings nothing really new to the genre.

(Ted Salamone)

MR. ROBOT

Datamost/Commodore 64/Disk

Allowing a compugamer to generate unique game screens from the "spare parts" inventory of a pre-



MR. ROBOT (DATAMOST)

designed game has become a mini-trend in its own right. With this freedom gamers can easily create, test, debug, and save screen layouts they feel are more challenging, more inventive, or more of whatever their hearts desire. These homemade versions can then be played just like the game originally residing on the disk.

Datamost's entry into this field is **Mr. Robot and His Robot Factory,** a climbing, running, jumping game in which one player uses a joystick to maneuver his on-screen alter ego through the various obstacles encountered in the 22 different levels. If that's not enough, the generator is capable of making another 26!

The object is to advance through each of the game's screens, capturing all the power pills from the underlying grids by walking directly over them. Modes of travel include ladders, escalators, trampolines, treadmills, and firehouse poles. Selectively placed magnets help in jumping further, while transporter tokens move the gamer's surrogate a la "Star Trek's" "Beam me up, Scotty" routine.

Contacting a suspended-life token adds a reserve life to the initial four, and doing the same with alien-fire has the opposite effect. The tables can be turned momentarily by absorbing an energizer so Mr. Robot can do away with the hotfoot fellow. Jumping over a bomb also has the same effect, though this method of elimination is worth two to ten times as much. Other ways of perishing include falling too far or running out of energy.

The race goes to the quickest and sharpest, as there are numerous dead-end situations with no way out but death. Choosing this morbid method of course means restarting the screen from scratch. It's tough being a robot!

There is a toggle sound on/off option, though it would be a pity to eliminate such entertaining audio. The graphics are first-rate and the animation couldn't possibly be smoother. The metal man does what he's supposed to; no nasty surprises await the uninitiated.

Color has been liberally applied to all the screens, giving them a festive Mardi Gras feeling.

Couple all this with the interesting game play, the five player-selectable skill levels, and the increasing challenge, and what have you got? A hit, of course!

Even home arcaders with a similar game in their libraries should check this offering out — it has all the right stuff.

(Ted Salamone)

ATTACK OF THE PHANTOM KARATE DEVILS

Phantom/Commodore 64/Disk, Cassette

In this martial arts game for the Commodore 64 players guide (by joystick) an "empty hands" hero to avenge the death of his parents, his Master, and the Master's daughter. To do this, the player must overwhelm the dreaded Ninja, traverse several horizontally-scrolling regions, and destroy stockpiled munitions before they explode.

Each section is entered into only if the minimum number of points are earned before the fighter succumbs to fatigue, direct enemy attack, or the cold steel of thrown daggers and stars in this one-player offering.

Punching, kicking, jumping, and walking to the left maneuvers gamers closer to the endless stream of evil ones, as well as the portals to the other realms. Fifty points allow entry to the netherworld, 100 to the bridge scene, and 200 to the finale, ControlWorld. Here belt holders have fifteen seconds to destroy the explosives.

The use of individual sprites for the fighter's hands and legs provides excellent agility (control), quick reflexes, and unparalleled realism.

However, the use of standard keyboard-generated graphics for the backgrounds and a very annoying glitch bring **Attack of the Phantom Karate Devils** to the level of those cheap, lower-than-B movies which make weekend TV such a wasteland.

What milieu does exist (most of the screen is basic black to hide the similarly clad Ninja) appears shoddy. Much worse is what happens when a Ninja is backed up to the left side of the first screen. Most of him reappears about two-thirds of the way across the screen, behind the player's figure. The fighting continues, with hits registering as if they were still locked together in mortal combat. Nothing but poor programming can explain this sad state of affairs.

Besides, the graphics lack detail, the sound effects are minimal (mostly those of body contact), and the action becomes repetitive after a while. The best way to vanquish a foe is to step into the fray and flail away with all you've got. This winning approach doesn't leave much room for tactics.

Even the realistic action and multiple methods of attack can't save *PKD.* The Ninja actually deserve to win this one!

(Ted Salamone)

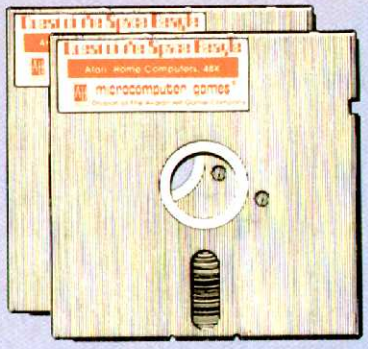
LOCK 'N' CHASE

Mattel/Apple II/48K Disk

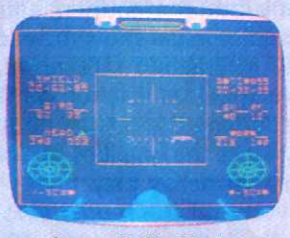
Until recently, games were written for the Apple and then converted to other systems. Rarely did the reverse take place. Videogames never made the crossover.

Now Activision, Atari and Mattel —

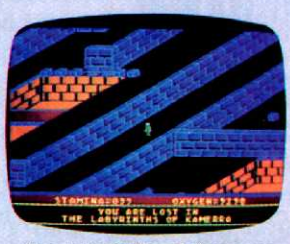
Quest of the Space Beagle®



Scott Lamb's Interactive Space Fantasy Adventure

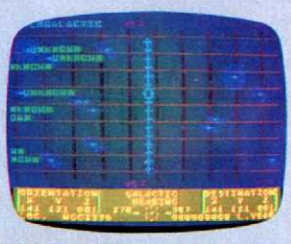


Space Battle Display



The Labyrinths of Kamerra

Hyperwarp Temporal Imbalance Sensor Grid



Galactic Starmap Display

The sequel to JUPITER MISSION 1999®

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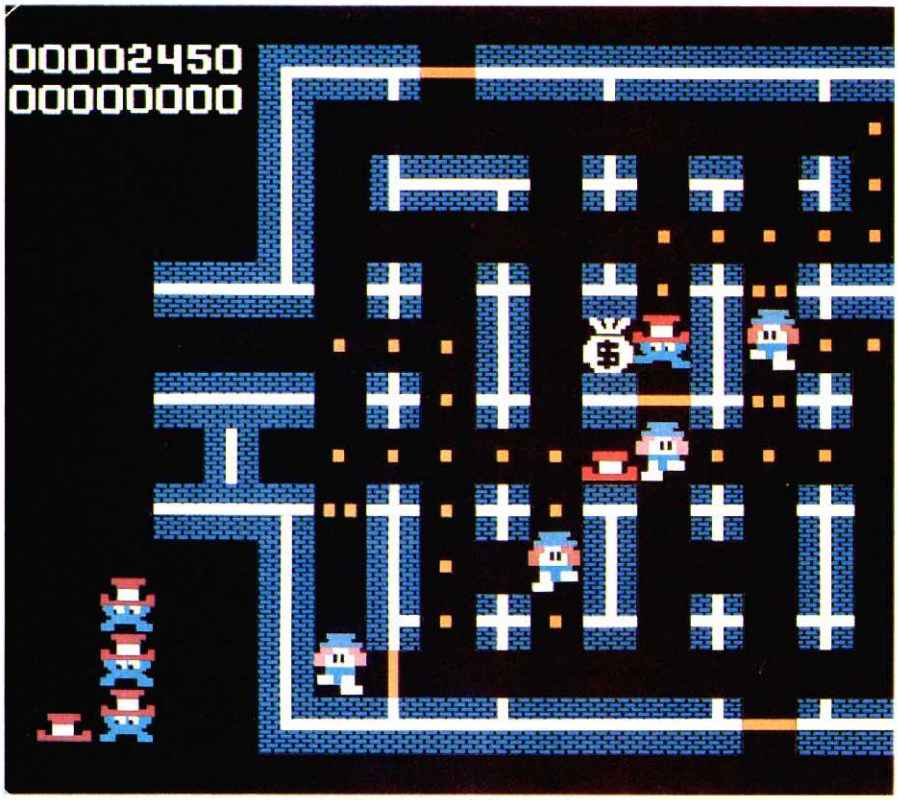
to name just three — are adapting videogames for various computer systems. The idea should be applauded, but the choices for conversions are sometimes a bit puzzling.

Apple owners may not flock to Mattel's **Lock 'N' Chase** to any great extent. The play-mechanic theme and programming aren't bad; but Atari-Soft's **Pac-Man** will be a tough competitor.

In fact, *Lock 'N' Chase* stands alone without bearing the imprint of conversion on its swarthy exterior.



LOCK 'N' CHASE (MATTEL)

The robber scores points for each of the coins he picks up. He also gets points for picking up various bonus items, scattered throughout the 10 different vaults. There are six thieves. At 20,000 points, you get another thief. There are also five game speeds with on-screen movement controlled by either joystick or keyboard.

There are two kinds of doors within the vault that can save or doom the robber. The first type are green doors, which lock and unlock at random. Then there are purple doors that the thief can lock by either pressing the joystick button when in that mode or by hitting the 'S' key when in keyboard control.

The documentation is sparse, but well-written and to the point. Other than the possibility of choosing a more original idea for one of the first computer conversions, *Lock 'N' Chase* is a solid game worth the attention of any gamer without enough dot/maze challenges in his collection.

(Rick Teverbaugh)

WORMS?

Electronic Arts/Commodore 64/Disk

Don't read this review! Instead just gaze trancelike at the picture which depicts the video experience entitled **Worms?** by Electronic Arts for the C-64 and Atari computers.

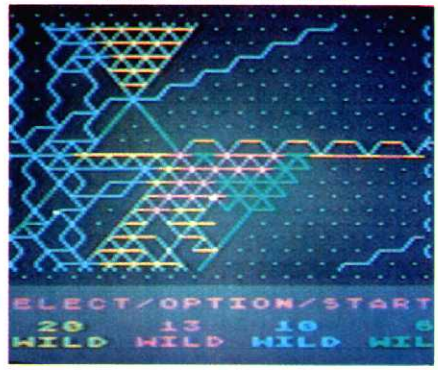
As a paraphrase of the initial instructions, the first paragraph gives home computerists a good indication of what to expect from this offering.

Wandering worms create patterns across the screen with minimal or absolutely no input from the player, depending upon the type of wigglers chosen. NEW worms must be trained to interact, AUTO and WILD worms are both computer-guided—the former in a smart fashion, the latter in a random manner.

If so chosen, the gamer just has to boot the disk, choose the proper options and sit back.

As the worms travel they produce music. When one completes a territory, the area flashes the color of the conquering worm and a point is added to that worm's score. With keyboard control, the worm's velocity can be changed, thereby altering the frequency of the music and the occurrence of conquered territories.

WORMS? (ELECTRONIC ARTS)



If two worms collide head-on, a short dirge announces the untimely demise of the combatants. However, this only leaves more territory for the survivors to stake out.

Markedly different from practically any other computer offering, *Worms?* provides a subtle contentment and an amusing audio/visual show instead of the highly interactive fare normally created. As great as it is for winding down or soothing the savage beast in all of us, it lacks the qualities for long-term appeal or heavy play.

(Ted Salamone)

DRAGONHAWK

Creative/Commodore 64/Disk

Dragonhawk is a tough, fast-paced action game blending a lot of **Joust** and a little of **Omega Race** with some fresh ideas. The mix works well.

One player uses a joystick to control a winged on-screen surrogate against waves of buzzards, iguanas, vampire bats, dragon puppies, giant mosquitos, and phoenixes — all running interference for the huge, vile dragon.

Repeatedly pressing the fire button gets your bird airborne. (An autofire stick works great; look ma, no cramped hands!) A centered stick allows for absolute vertical climbs, while flight in either direction results from simultaneous flapping and directional

DRAGONHAWK (CREATIVE)

input. Just pushing the controller to the left or right (without benefit of flapping) changes only the heading.

There are two ways to descend: stop flapping so gravity can go to work, or bounce off the top of the screen with varying degrees of force. Whatever method is employed, practice is needed to wind a safe path through the crowded airways.

To defeat an enemy, the bird must make contact from above. Likewise, the player's hawk dies when it's the low bird on the totem pole.

Additional lives (up to 24) can be obtained for every thousand points scored. Besides variable difficulty-level influenced scoring for vanquishing foes, interception of their remains (a feather) is the only way to net any points.

"Woe to the slow!" is *Dragonhawk*'s motto.

Loitering on any screen too long brings out the bolt brigade. Oversized, numerous, and very deadly lightning bolts crash down from the heavens. A fast finish is the only salvation.

Defeat of the fire-belching dragon is the ultimate goal. Of course, this is easier said than done. Possessing only one weak spot, and armed with a pin-point-accurate flame thrower, this is one bad news lizard. Gotta keep trying though!

The sprite graphics are phenomenal. Colorful, detailed, non-angular in appearance, they are (for the most part) masterpieces. Their movements are as lifelike as can be imagined for beings that never lived outside of someone's imagination. They also have an uncanny sixth sense concerning the gamer's video whereabouts, though smart players can use this to their advantage. Enough with the tips already, learn for yourself!

The only drawback is the lack of anything more than rudimentary audio effects. Flapping and feather-frying sounds practically sum up the list.

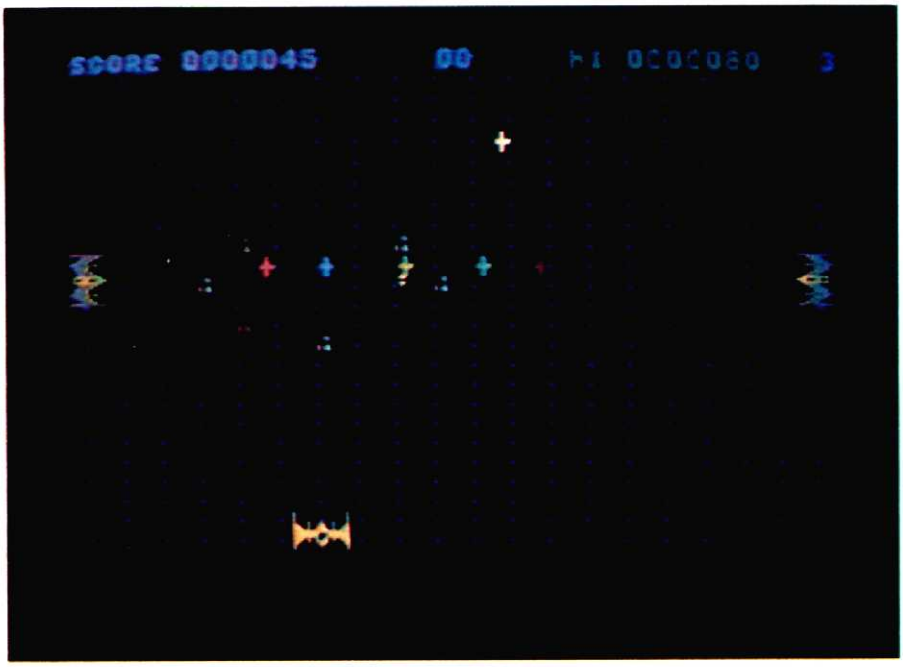
Fortunately this audio absence isn't too damaging, though inclusion of more could have elevated *DH* to the superstar category. As it stands, flaps, or flies, for now, *Dragonhawk* is an exciting, keep-'em-coming-back-for-more entertainment.

(Ted Salamone)

QUINTIC WARRIOR

Quicksilva/Commodore 64/Disk

Become a Quintic warrior and make a stand against hordes of vile mutant Zoronians as they attempt to destroy the Domed City in a futuristic battle highly reminiscent of HES's **Gridrunner.**



QUINTIC WARRIOR (QUICKSILVA)

This Commodore 64 offering from Quicksilva puts arcaders in control of a rapid-fire, highly maneuverable vessel traveling within the confines of a gridded one-dimensional "dome." Avian-like laser shooters located on the right, left and underside track the player's ship, firing deadly bolts of amplified light beams. Getting caught in the high intensity crossfire is curtains for any of the three craft comprising the original fleet. (A new ship is earned once a wave has been defeated.)

As the sinister beings move relentlessly upwards, mutated worms cross the screen latitudinally. Contact with them is just as fatal, so beware! Also be on the lookout for some nasty surprises.

Constant movement and continuous firing go hand-in-hand against these mindless attackers. Don't let up for a moment! Whether twisting, turning, diving or climbing, the fire button should be engaged at all times.

This 22-level, one-player contest is waged over a horizontally-scrolling, star-studded background. The instructions and story line are presented on-screen, as well as current and high scores, though it lacks a vanity board.

The laser blazers are multicolored sprites (rather good looking ones at that), though the Crabmen and worms are basically bit-mapped blobs. Unfortunately, the best visuals and audio effects are on the title screen. The gaming scenario falls short of meeting the great expectations created by the pre-game window dressing.

What **Quintic** does have is a frenetic pace and tremendously accurate joystick control. That probably isn't enough, since *QW*, being strictly run of the mill, has nothing new to offer.

(Ted Salamone)

GAME-A-THON

SCUBA VENTURE

IBM-Gebelli/PCjr/Cartridge

The PCjr may be a relatively new computer system, but from the looks of some of its "contemporary" software, they're already scraping the bottom of the barrel in the gaming realm.

Scuba Venture, issued by IBM but created by Nasir Gebelli's software firm, has the dubious distinction of looking as awful as it plays — and *that,* my friends, is quite an achievement. Players maneuver a diver up a vertically-scrolling "underwater" playfield that, visually, would be a scandal on the Atari 2600. The object

SCUBA VENTURE (IBM)

is to collect treasure and keys which are later employed to open undersea treasure chests. A cartel of poisonous fish, electric eels, seaweed and seahorses team up with the cavern walls and a larcenous — not to mention totally inexplicable — "ghost" diver to thwart our scuba-diving soldier of fortune.

That's it, folks: the sum total of this gaming experience. At least IBM hasn't insulted young arcaders by labeling this monstrosity a "children's" program. Put bluntly, this number wasn't released, it escaped.

(Bill Kunkel)

DIG DUG

Atarisoft/TI 99-4A

Heads up, gamers! That tireless little miner who digs, drops rocks, and blows up subterranean monsters has tunneled his way onto the TI, courtesy of Atarisoft. The name of the game (and of our hero) is **Dig Dug,** and the object is to do away with the underground nasties that he encounters. This can be done by blowing them up with the air pump he carries or by dropping rocks on them in the course of his tunneling. The tunneler must be facing the creatures to attack them; an approach from any other angle will result in his demise. Don't get cocky — he only has three lives! And beware of the dragons — they breathe fire so an approach from behind is most prudent. After two rocks have fallen in any round, a nice tidbit or fruit will appear in the center of the earth for ten seconds. If our hero can eat it in time, he earns bonus points.

Be warned that these creatures have a strange characteristic. Unless they are destroyed quickly, they turn into ghosts and can float directly through the ground towards the player's on-screen persona. While in that form, they cannot be destroyed. To defeat ghosts, they must be lured into a tunnel, whereupon they will become solid again and are vulnerable.

The player scores points for each chunk of dirt that he or she digs, for blowing up the monsters, and for dropping rocks on them. There are seven progressively more difficult levels to play, as well as pause function that works by pressing the space bar to pause during a game. Pressing the space bar again resumes play.

Atarisoft's TI *Dig Dug* compares nicely with its arcade forbearer. Players who liked the arcade version will really welcome this nicely translated cartridge!

(Joseph Pedreiro)
(Siobhan Stevens)

STARGATE

Atarisoft/Apple II/Disk

Stargate! Picking up where **Defender** left off, this outer space scrolling shoot-'em-up has players battling Space Hums, Pods, Landers, Mutants and more in an effort to rescue humanoid hostages meandering about the surface of an unidentified, unstable planet.

A rapid-fire laser, a limited supply of smart bombs (which destroy all the on-screen menaces), the ability to hyperspace (with a 25% chance of dying each time), and Inviso Cloaking shields are at the gamer's disposal in this fight to the finish against hordes of hostile aliens.

Besides the more common foes, Phreds, Firebombers, Big Reds, and Yllabian Space Guppies hamper the arcader's attempts to find hostages, warp through waves (courtesy of the stargate), and amass points.

This solo game offers keyboard or joystick control, though only the fastest touch-typists stand a chance with key control, due to the frenzied on-screen activity. Vessels fly, hover, scoot, and shoot from all angles. Talk about the need for more air traffic controllers!

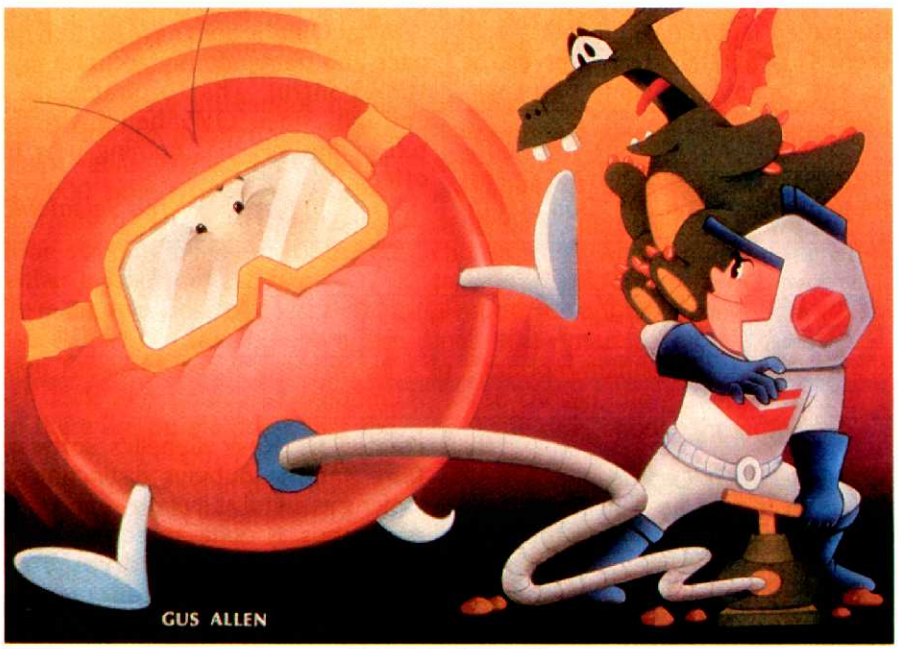
Constant, measured movement prevents the enemy from launching a come-from-behind attack while it minimizes the possibility of rushing headlong into utter oblivion as the ship is thrusted up, down, left, or right.

A radar scanner enables players to identify the whereabouts of the enemy. Defensive, as well as offensive, action is easier once pilots learn to make proper use of this. The viewscreen is vital to video longevity, as *Stargate's* brief demo mode doesn't show much about playing the game.

The graphics are sparse, mostly line figures with very little detail; the audio effects are worse. Even though the Apple doesn't have great sound capabilities, more could have been accomplished. As for the visuals, even though it's a literal coin-op translation, that doesn't mean it has to look like it was outfitted at the nearest Goodwill box.

All the ingredients that made *Defender* such a great game are included. Even more have been added, yet *Stargate* for the Apple II still falls short of the mark.

(Ted Salamone)

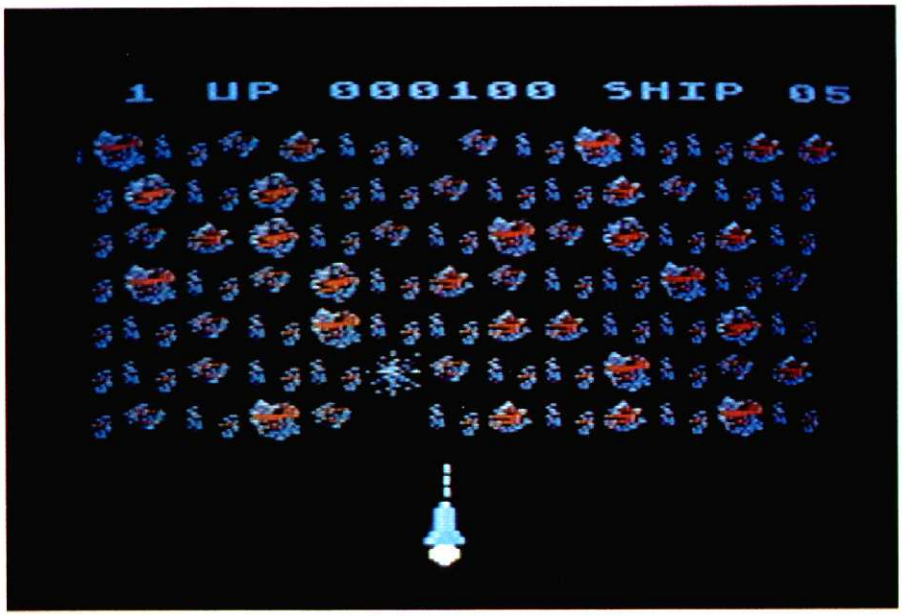


DIG DUG (ATARISOFT)

THE OFFICIAL MOON SHUTTLE

Datasoft/Atari/16K Disk or Cassette

Although **Moon Shuttle** is a little bit more than just another invasion game,



OFFICIAL MOON SHUTTLE (DATASOFT)

it's highly unlikely that the program will ever create a big stir because invasion games, in general, have fallen to the wayside. However, for the true believers, *Moon Shuttle* is a welcome addition.

Based on the Nichibutsu coin-op, this program features five screens, only four of which are filled with invaders. The fifth screen, which appears before each of the others, is a series of asteroid belts through which the player must navigate his ship. The only problem is that with each successive appearance, more and more of the asteroid belts begin moving.

As stated before, there are four types of invaders: bomb launchers (which look like floating heads wearing sunglasses), expandos (syringes by any other name), man-o'-wars (loose brain matter), and blob men (sunbursts). Each has its own distinctive traits. The bomb launchers, for example, rotate while crossing the screen. The blob men split into two when fired upon.

Although the play-mechanic in *Moon Shuttle* may be a trifle old-hat, the game itself is fairly addictive and well worth a look by anyone who enjoys repelling invaders.

(Vincent Puglia)

STRIP POKER

Artworx/Commodore 64/Disk

Artworx's **Strip Poker** disk for the C-64 allows card players to daringly engage in a risk-free version of a risque game of chance.

The master disk pits would-be card sharks against the consummate player Melissa, or the less experienced Suzi. Other disks provide different opponents of either sex. In order to win — or just keep their pride intact — gamers must learn each opponent's style of play.

The house rules for five-card draw are fully explained, but some knowledge of poker basics is required since this isn't a game tutorial.

The top half of the screen displays a reclining opponent, while the rest shows the cards dealt the home computerist. After an automatic $5 ante, players use the joystick to choose among such options as STAY, DROP, BET, RAISE, and CALL.

If both stay, the ante is upped and the hand redealt. Dropping concedes the hand; betting and raising are done in $5 increments (to a $25 limit), up to two times per person per round. Moving a pointer over the cards, gamblers can draw up to five new ones. The other player shows his or her hand only if they lose — but there's no need to worry since the program doesn't cheat (or so it says)!

Players remove articles of clothing to borrow more cash once their initial stake of $100 is depleted. When the computer figure disrobes, a saucy tune plays to the accompaniment of a few choice words. These items are put back on when the debt is repaid.

What really makes this work is the exceptional portrayal of never-before-seen intimate details. Certainly adult fare, *Strip Poker* can be great fun at any informal gathering.

(Ted Salamone)

ROUND ABOUT

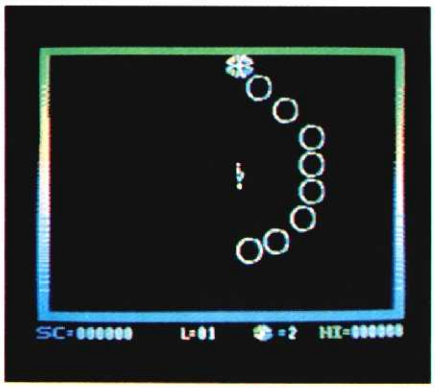
Datamost/Commodore 64/Disk

As commander of the starship Roundabout, the gamer has to "make space a reasonably safe frontier" by shooting all the on-screen aliens before they destroy the three ships comprising the entire fleet. Completing levels 4, 10, and 18 earns extra ships.

Guiding Roundabout horizontally and (sometimes) vertically around the screen with a joystick, video vice-admirals have to evade and destroy the foes attacking in patterns determined by their geometric shapes.

Some of these enemies are Hoops (circles), Woox (big asterisks), Stars, Dimunz (guess!), and Boxes. Though none shoot back, they are fatal upon contact.

STRIP POKER (ARTWORX)



ROUNDABOUT (DATAMOST)

This one-player game is mostly a reflex tester in which the depressed fire button spews out a steady stream of limited range missiles. Practice, a good memory, and fast hands are needed to handle the various confrontations in this watered down, somewhat twisted version of **Galaxian, Gyruss,** and **Megamania.**

A brief intermission featuring a famous Bally-Midway character (initials P.M.) is inexplicably included.

The aliens are visually bland, the play-mechanic is the same old thing, and the great sound capabilities of the 64 are clearly under-utilized.

The semi-fluid approach to on-screen positioning of the arcader's ship doesn't provide enough of a variation to bring any new excitement to what is essentially a dodge-and-destroy space invasion game.

(Ted Salamone)

FLOYD OF THE JUNGLE

MicroProse/Commodore 64/Disk

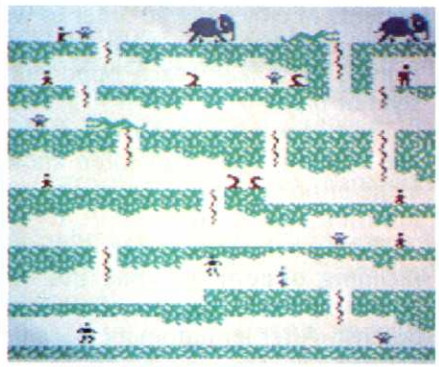
Floyd of the Jungle is not an awe-inspiring name for a five-screen game in which one or two players climb vines, run and jump to avoid dart-firing pygmies, man-eating plants, and wild animals, while trying to rescue a fair maiden.

As it turns out though, MicroProse's action-offering is aptly titled, since it doesn't have any great moments. It doesn't even have any good ones!

The graphics, so substandard that they are an insult, display an incredible lack of detail and imagination. the sound effects are quite unremarkable, while the play-mechanic is even worse. For instance, poorly executed collision detection routines result in many an untimely death.

Floyd is definitely not Lord of the Jungle!

(Ted Salamone)



FLOYD OF THE JUNGLE (MICRO PROSE)

TRANSLATIONS

MURDER ON THE ZINDERNEUF

Designed by Freefall Associates, Electronic Arts/Commodore 64/Disk

Owners of the Commodore 64 no longer have to envy their Atari owning brethren, because Electronic Arts has released the 64 version of **Murder on the Zinderneuf,** and it's as much of a winner as its Atari counterpart.

MURDER ON THE ZINDERNEUF (FREE FALL)

As a famous detective (Achille Merlot, Inspector Klutzeau, and Agatha Marbles are some of the choices) on a transatlantic crossing, gamers must nab the culprit in a murder before the airship docks at Lakehurst. Twelve game hours, or about 45 minutes in real time, is all the time allowed for the task.

It's up to the master criminologist to piece together clues by searching rooms, observing everyone carefully, and interrogating the fifteen suspects in this animated, colorful, hi-res scrolling whodunnit.

Each detective has five ways of questioning suspects, depending on which law enforcer has been chosen. The Klutzeau bumbles, while Charity Flaire might flirt.

A joystick controls on-screen movement as well as option selection (ignore, interrogate, accuse) in this one-player game. A handy map shows the airbag's layout, shape of the player's pieces, and a brief description of each person and their quarters.

The documentation, which includes a dossier on everyone as well as the rules, is easy to follow. Some background dope in the period helps to set the mood.

If the mystery isn't solved before the time expires (the zeppelin never runs late), a final accusation can be made. Of course, a gamer's prestige is lowered (as well as his rating) for any incorrect accusations. Deductive reasoning and a devious mind are needed to solve the mystery, which, by the way, is different each time it's played. Once again, a solid job from Freefall Associates.

(Ted Salamone)

CROSSFIRE

Sierravision/IBM PCjr/Disk

While IBM has issued this classic Sierravision arcade-action contest in cartridge form, the creators retained the disk rights and have now produced the same program in this format.

The sole differences between the IBM/Sierra and Sierravision versions are that the disk offers a two-player option and a very funky soundtrack. The eight-bar blues tune sounds quite nice and includes the finest mouth-harp simulation ever produced for a computer game, but if you already own the cartridge, these exceedingly minor enhancements shouldn't send you clamoring to softwareville for the revamp. If you own neither, however, that musical soundtrack really is quite a treat.

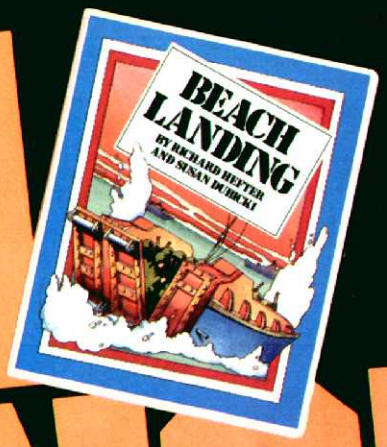
(Bill Kunkel)

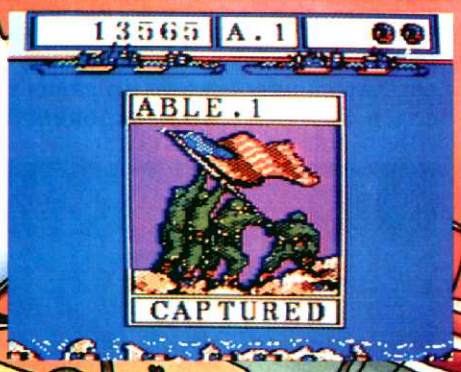
CHARLES GOREN: LEARNING BRIDGE MADE EASY

CBS Software/Apple II/48K Disk

If anyone has ever tried to teach you to play bridge by hanging over your shoulder and telling you what card to play when, this program from CBS will have a familiar air to it. However, **Learning Bridge Made Easy** always gives you at least one chance to figure things out for yourself. There's nothing here that could be called really snappy action or reach-out-and-grab-you graphics, but all the cards are

BEACH LANDING!





Beach Landing, the spine-tingling new strategy arcade game from Weekly Reader Family Software, offers the thrill of combat as landing ships hit the shell-wracked beach ...dodge withering enemy fire...and unload our fighting men so they can plant Old Glory on the embattled shore! But beware Yank! One error in strategy and the battle is lost!

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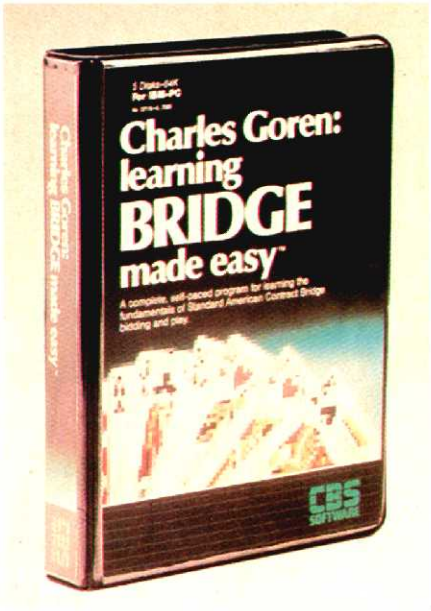


clearly recognizable — even in Apple's basic green and black — and they move quickly, to the appropriate places when the need arises.

What *Learning Bridge does* have is a well-designed and comprehensive tutorial program. It covers everything from basic point counts to recognizing and bidding 6 no-trump without an anxiety attack. And, as in the Commodore version, there's ample opportunity to practice each section before moving on. (Typing "?" will give you a crib sheet screen if you get stuck on some of the finer points.) In the final section, where full games can be played, the computer serves as the gamer's coach and plays both opponents' hands. If the wrong card is led, there may be a prompt, but sometimes the computer impatiently plays the correct card from either your hand or the dummy's. If sufficiently exasperated by the level of play, it suggests referring to the book that comes with the disk. *Learning Bridge* is a stern taskmaster, but an excellent teacher.

(Louise Kohl)

POGO JOE

Screenplay/Atari/48K Disk

Here's a real first: a game originally programmed for the Commodore 64 that doesn't look quite as pretty on the Atari.

Not that **Pogo Joe's** play-action suffers in the translation from one major gaming computer to another. On the contrary, William F. Denman Jr.'s color-changing contest is a pretty, challenging multi-screen action game. In fact, its graphics are quite good, despite the fact that the C-64 version's are better.

Players control Pogo Joe, a mischievous-looking boy on a pogo stick. Joe must hop back and forth across the on-screen cylinders, changing the colors of each one's top. Brightly-colored eggs appear at intervals, and Joe earns points by crushing them. Once they hatch, though, they can cost him a life by touching him; or run away and be caught for extra points; or change their cylinders back to neutral colors, depending on the creature hatched.

If you've never seen *Pogo Joe* on the Commodore 64, this translation of the game will prove a challenging, very enjoyable game with lots of replay potential. It eliminates the frustration of falling off the playfield, an obvious danger in most of the other color-changing games on the market, giving players the chance to concentrate on point-earning strategies instead.

(Tracie Forman)

POGO JOE FOR ATARI (SCREENPLAY)

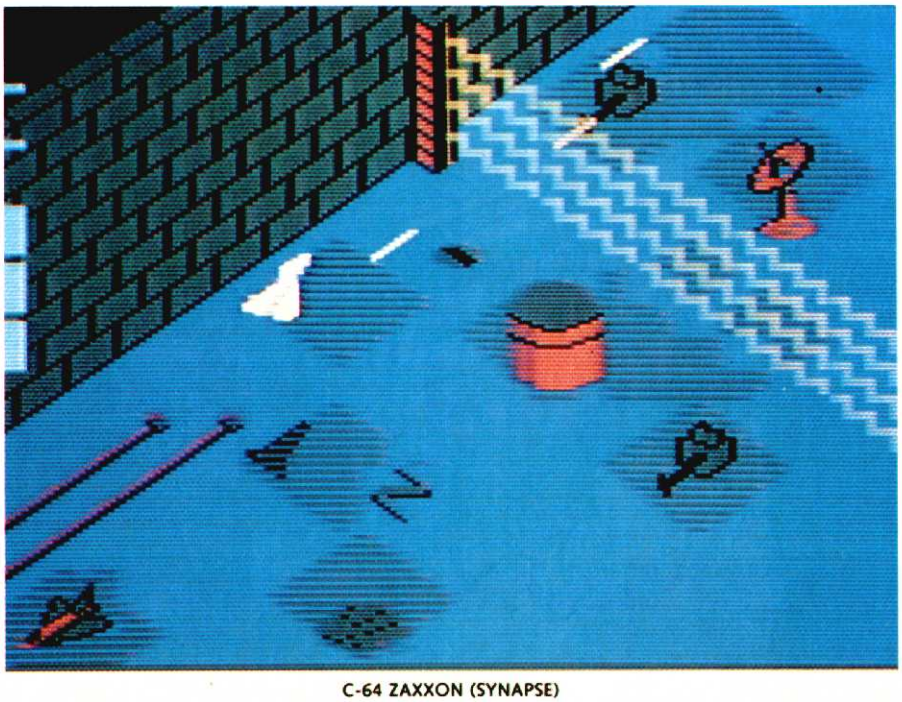
ZAXXON

Synapse/Commodore 64/Disk

Just one more home version of **Zaxxon?** Not at all. Completely reprogrammed from the title page onward, this one- or two-player horizontally scrolling shoot-out is the definitive home edition of Sega's coin-op hit of 1982—out of many such editions.

Getting the visuals to their high level must rate as the outstanding design achievement in doing this program. Everything is multicolored, and there are extra dangers and play-features which are wholly new to this specific version. The outer space sequence, which separates the forays against the sky cities, has never been executed better for the home screen.

(Steve Davidson)



C-64 ZAXXON (SYNAPSE)

ARDY AARDVARK

Datamost/Commodore 64/Disk

"Help Ardy lick the ants!" Sound appetizing? Maybe not, but it sure is fun. **Ardy Aardvark** turns out to be a welcome surprise. Not many games provide such addictingly enjoyable, lighthearted fun.

The object of this one-player game is to snap up all the green ant larvae in the different tunnels while avoiding or eliminating the worms, army ants and spiders with Ardy's incredibly long, extremely flexible tongue.

If the ants or spiders bite any portion of his tongue (other than the tip) Ardy goes to the big anthill in the sky. The worms are deadly unless eaten from behind, while the arachnids can only be indirectly exterminated by devour-

ing one of two power crystals found in the lower corners of the maze.

The spiders are numerous and tough, so it's best to complete a round before the moon waxes and wanes to the left side of the screen, causing the influx of web weavers.

A joystick extends and controls Ardy's tongue, while the fire button retracts it at warp speed. As the game progresses, the catacombs become much more intricate, some with only one way in or out of a particular section. Thus planning, speed, and agility are needed to earn the extra life for every 10,000 points scored. This lofty goal is easier to attain by garnering the bonus — 15 points for each remaining leftward shift of the moon.

The tongue makes a good slurping noise when withdrawn quickly, and the animation and control couldn't be better. The visuals are stimulating and colorful, particularly the moon overhead and the "slice of the earth" effect. The screen looks like a wildly-colored ant farm with a nocturnal visitor prowling on the surface.

Ardy is as habit-forming as it is fun. Top-notch in all respects.

(Ted Salamone)

M.U.L.E.

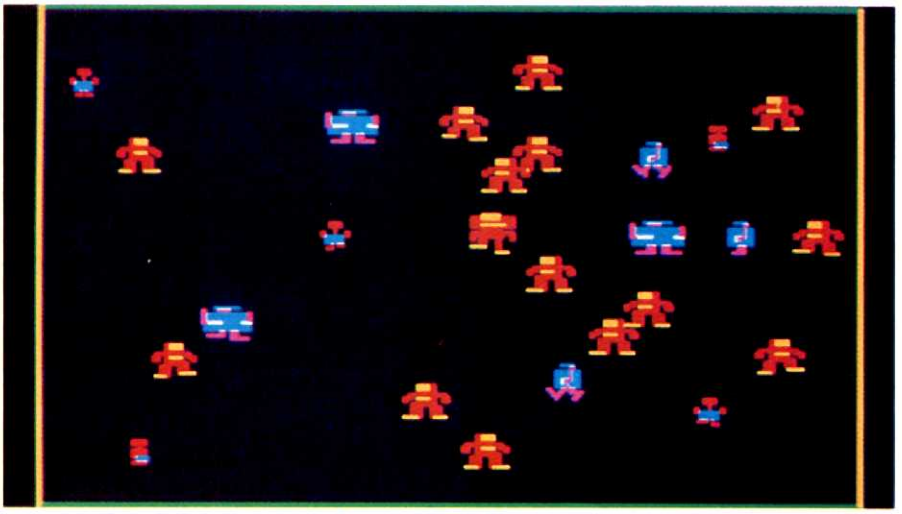
Designed by Ozark Softscape
Electronic Arts/C-64/Disk

The Commodore 64 version of **M.U.L.E.** features exactly the same play-mechanic as its Atari counterpart: One to four players are settled on a barren planet with little to live on except their wits. To survive, they must claim and develop plots of land to produce food, energy, smithore and crystite, then buy what they need — as well as selling off the surplus — during the auction phase. Whoever has the most cash, goods, and property at the end of twelve rounds is proclaimed First Founder of the colony.

As in the Atari version, each player chooses his or her own color and character. But a few of the Atari program's

PICK YOUR SPECIES
USE YOUR JOYSTICK OR KEYBOARD TO MOVE YOUR COLOR TO THE SPECIES THAT YOU MOST RESEMBLE.
PRESS YOUR BUTTON TO SELECT.

C-64 M.U.L.E. (ELECTRONIC ARTS)



ROBOTRON (ATARISOFT)

perks have been left off the game, probably in the rush to bring *M.U.L.E.* to market. For example, the theme song — which is one of the most lavish ever heard on the Atari — has been knocked down from four-part harmony to only three, sounding a bit tinny to gamers who cut their teeth on the Atari version. And some of the animated sequences, like the mountain-moving earthquakes, have been scaled down or eliminated entirely.

Because of the C-64's two joystick ports, if more than two are playing they have to switch joysticks back and forth, and crowd around the machine's keyboard to claim their land during the auction phase.

In spite of these trimmings, if it's a real sit-down, family-style amusement that suits your fancy, *M.U.L.E.* is one of the finest programs currently available. There are painfully few programs that can be played head-to-head, and even fewer that allow four people to compete simultaneously. And the game offers more financial wheeling and dealing, cutthroat tactics, and heat-of-the moment excitement than even the ol' standard, *Monopoly*.

(Tracie Forman)

ROBOTRON

Atarisoft/Commodore 64/Cartridge

Ever wondered what it would be like to try and run with your feet mired in mud? No? Maybe this translation of **Robotron** will give you a taste of it. The hairtrigger action from the arcade blastathon seems to have gotten left out of this cartridge, replaced by a murky, poorly thought-out movement scheme that doesn't respond well to quick movements. In other words, players are likely to get killed because they couldn't get out of the missile's way in time.

Like other home versions of this game, players have the option of using one or both joysticks to move. The graphics bear a close resemblance to the arcade original, but they too are flawed. The human woman that players are supposed to save looks incredibly like one of the enemy droid types, an unnecessary complication to a game that requires split-second decision-making.

Considering the outstanding job Atari and Atarisoft did on other versions of the arcade hit, Commodore 64 owners have a right to complain that this time they got the short end of the stick.

(Tracie Forman)

JUNGLE HUNT

AtariSoft/Apple II/Disk

The programmer of this multi-scenario action-adventure has wisely made a virtue out of dire necessity. Knowing that the Apple couldn't present even a remote facsimile of Taito's coin-op visuals for the game, the programmer elected to generate a graphic look with which the Apple could be comfortable. So although this doesn't look much like the play-for-pay title of the same name, the Apple edition of **Jungle Hunt** is pretty close to its inspiration in play-action and feel.

This is more of an adventure for arcade-action fans than dyed-in-the-wool questers. Its action is fairly easy to learn, and the hero generally worries about only one problem at a time.

(Steve Davidson)

SEAFOX

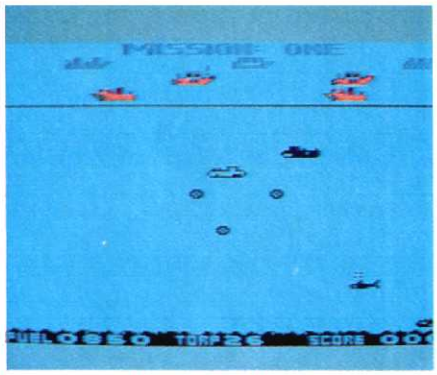
Broderbund/VIC-20/Cartridge

In **Seafox,** the gamer controls sub-

marine intent on sinking enemy freighters. However, some features prevent the game from being a simple blastathon, and even encourage a little patience. For example, fuel and arms need to be replenished occasionally. Also, some of the vessels on the water's surface are hospital ships.

Since the player's torpedoes can only fire upward or forward, they require different play-actions. In the case of an upward-firing torpedo, the fire button is depressed for a short period, while the sub-hunting torpedo needs a longer burst.

Torpedoing the submarines is fairly easy. Either get below them and give a short burst on the fire button, or face them at a safe distance and fire a forward-moving torpedo. Sinking the surface vessels is a different matter, though. Because the enemy ships cross near the top of the screen, they use the hospital ships, which are closer to the sub, as shields. If the player hits a Red Cross ship the torpedo immediately bounces back. Therefore, the gamer must wait for a clean shot.



SEAFOX (BRODERBUND)

Supplies are brought in by a friendly ship which crosses the bottom of the screen. It releases a trained dolphin, who carries the supplies to the player's submarine. Occasionally though, a giant clam swims by and eats the supplies. Be careful not to ram the dolphin — its friends don't take too kindly to it.

(Vincent Puglia)

ARTICLES OF WAR

BROADSIDES (SSI)

BROADSIDES

Strategic Simulations/Apple II 48K/Disk

The salt spray was a constant rain I no longer felt, no more than I still noticed the rolling of the deck beneath me after so many months at sea. But the sound of the enemy's guns, no more than five hundred yards away, was a thunder far louder than any of old Neptune's storms had ever roared. They were firing chain shot and above me I could hear a sail rip, and the sound of a mast splintering as the ship shuddered to the blow.

The Captain roared out his order to back sails, the First Officer beside me responded with a crisp "Aye, Aye, Sir!" and as he turned to relay the order he smiled at me — shoring up the newest Ensign's courage, I realized, and I tried to smile back.

Another roar as our own starboard broadside fired a charge of grape shot at the enemy. And from the hail-like sound of the grape, the shrapnel of exploding canisters, and the way a few of the other officers tested their swords in their scabbards, I didn't need the Captain's shouted order to "prepare to grapple" to realize that we were going to try to board.

Surrounded by a cloud of salt spray in the midst of the wide Atlantic, I could feel my mouth go as dry as powder. But still, there was something about riding that three-decker ragwagon into a battle royale that I would not have traded for any farm in Sussex.

No other computer game comes close to capturing the flavor and excitement of Napoleonic Era sea battles in the manner of **Broadsides,** one of the lastest releases from Strategic Simulations. For ship-to-ship battles this is as close as most of us will ever come to treading the deck of a commissioned first-rate Ship Of the Line.

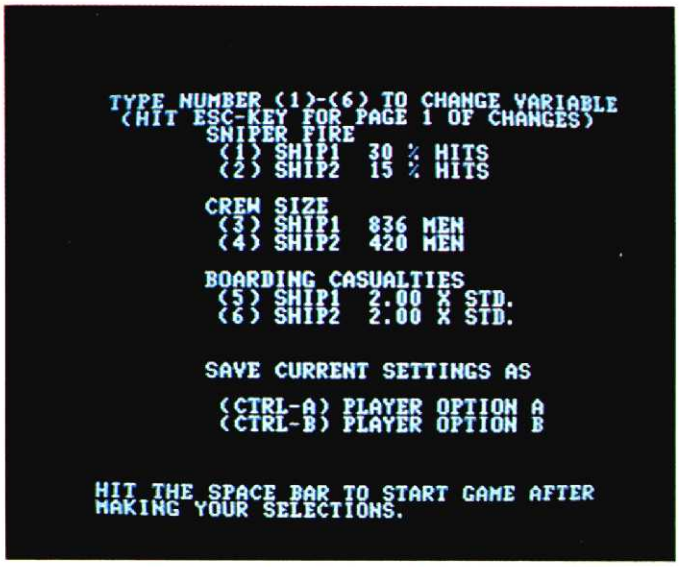
When you first boot the disk, you realize that *Broadsides* is designed to be played in two ways, which the manual refers to as arcade and tactical levels of play. It is one of the first choices you will have to make on the main, multiple-choice structured, menu screen. But both games can be played at ten levels of speed, and the tactical game can be even more of a real-time challenge than the arcade version. The main difference is that the commands and choices are more realistic in the tactical version.

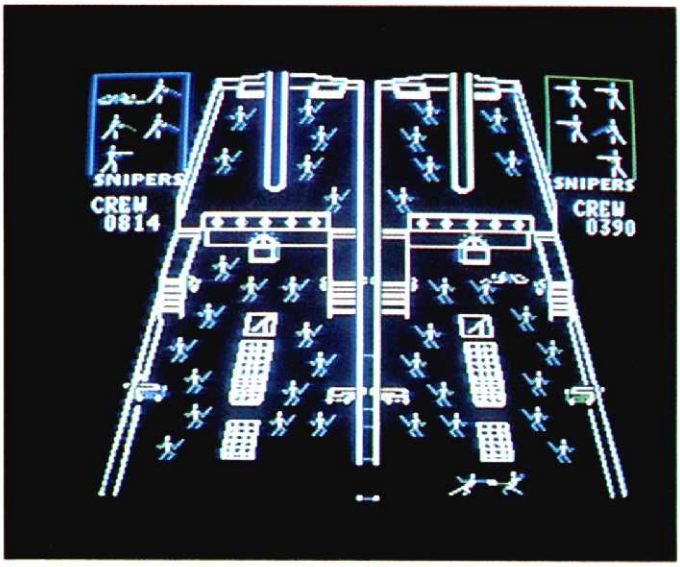
Both versions are fought on the same displays — the Sailing Screen and the Boarding Screen. Both screens feature realistic, high-resolution graphics *and* animation as well as providing all the complex informational output and ability to input commands that any wargamer will be looking for.

On the left of the Sailing Screen is an overhead view of the two ships engaged. Ship 1 is shown in violet and Ship 2 in green. This overhead view will automatically shift in both scale and location in order to keep the moving and maneuvering ships in view.

To the right of the overhead view, the screen is dominated by the two very detailed silhouettes of the ships. Beneath each ship, much information is listed. Just beneath the name of the ship is the command line. This line's contents are controlled by the Captain's game paddle. As you rotate the game paddle, a different order is displayed and, if it is the order you choose, you then press the game paddle button to issue that command. In a two-player game both Captains have a paddle; if you are fighting against Captain Computer, the computer's command line always displays simply "Aye, Aye, Sir!." Also listed in this area is information as to the number of hale and hearty crew, intact hull units, the maximum speed possible for the ship, the speed it is presently making, and a gun-by-gun breakdown of the cannonry on both port and starboard broadsides. Back on the left of the screen, beneath the overhead view, is listed the time of day, present wind direction and speed, along with a cumulative readout of each player's victory points. As the game progresses the detailed ship silhouettes will change to show the actual damage to the sails, masts and hull.

Possible orders accurately reflect the intricate sea-dance performed by these ocean-going maidens of war. Each captain's order, each action by crew and ship, happens in proper sequence. These ships do not turn on a dime, and loading a full broadside isn't


TYPE NUMBER (1)-(6) TO CHANGE VARIABLE
(HIT ESC-KEY FOR PAGE 1 OF CHANGES)
SNIPER FIRE
(1) SHIP1 30 % HITS
(2) SHIP2 15 % HITS
CREW SIZE
(3) SHIP1 836 MEN
(4) SHIP2 420 MEN
BOARDING CASUALTIES
(5) SHIP1 2.00 X STD.
(6) SHIP2 2.00 X STD.
SAVE CURRENT SETTINGS AS
(CTRL-A) PLAYER OPTION A
(CTRL-B) PLAYER OPTION B
HIT THE SPACE BAR TO START GAME AFTER
MAKING YOUR SELECTIONS.



The beginning and the end: Choosing your ships (left) and the overhead view from *Broadsides'* Boarding Screen.

as easy or quick as preparing a simple artillery piece. The successful captain in this game, as in the 18th and 19th centuries, will be the one who best understands his ship's capabilities and can time the maneuvering and firing to the absolute split-second.

The orders in the full, tactical, version cover almost all aspects of ship-to-ship combat. You may issue maneuver orders to turn, to go slower or faster, to go from vulnerable, but fast, full sails to slower but safer battle sails, and you can back sail to quickly reduce your speed (quickly being a relative term in this context). The firing commands allow you to aim at either the enemy's hull or sail. You can choose roundshot (solid shot), or you can go with sail-destroying chain shot, or choose the terror of the average seadog: a barrage of anti-personnel grape shot.

Just as sailing ships do in real life, the video ragwagons move ponderously into the wind, more quickly with it. So knowing how to sail (or learning from the game) is a distinct advantage. A full understanding of maneuvering is quite necessary, as these ships fire only in narrow arcs from fixed guns on their sides.

The arcade version utilizes fewer commands than above. Broadsides always do double damage, and there is no way to choose various shots. But broadsides, if aimed properly, always hit. In the tactical version, when you fire a broadside you also have to range it — the computer presents you with three ranges, only one of which is right. Choose the wrong range and splash! — your misspent broadside only disturbs Davy Jones' slumbers. While the manual suggests you first play the tactical game at a slow speed, you will quickly want to try the more exact tactical version, but at arcade speed which is about three times as fast as the actual ships moved.

When the ships run into each other, they are considered fouled and grappled. At that point the display switches to the Boarding Screen where the crews of the ships go into hand-to-hand combat. Each player (or you and the computer) runs one of two animated swordfighters via the keyboard. Thrusting, counterthrusting and hacking are all possible and will all have different results against each other. When one of the swordfighters is killed, that is taken as evidence that so many casualties have been lodged against the dead man's crew. In this manner, the crew of both ships gradually shrinks. And, meanwhile, animated snipers in the riggings may be ordered to fire at enemy on your deck, on the enemy deck or in the rigging to mount up more casualties.

In positioning the swordfighter, choose either a defensive or an offensive posture. A defensive stance, if successful, enables cutting the grappling lines and returning to the Sailing Screen.

After you play for a while, you will want to take advantage of the three "variables pages" or menu screens that you can reach from the beginning of the program. These three screens present a wide range of choices which will allow customizing play to just about every type of ship as well as allowing you to adjust play mechanics.

The manual lists various ships of the period and details of their physical makeup and crew complement. With that information, using the three variable screens, you can "build" your own ships. In this way you can simulate just about any historical ship-to-ship combat of the period.

You can also change such things as the amount of damage a ship's broadsides inflict, firing and loading times turning times, possible speed, hull points, and such. After changing everything from a ship's name to its speed, the whole thing can be saved to disk. Unfortunately only two such player options can be saved at a time so you will not be able to have a fleet of ship types at your beck and call. But the changes are so easy to make that the whole process takes minutes.

Missing from the manual is any in-depth discussion of the tactics used in this type of fighting. Although the manual does detail how one ship can rake another (pass perpendicular to it so that its broadsides have full effect while the enemy cannot fire) and effect double the damage, it should be mentioned that this "crossing the tee" maneuver is crucial to playing the game. It is just about the only way a player can inflict damage without endangering his own ship.

To place yourself into a position to rake means you must achieve what commanders of the period called "the weather gauge." Because a ship cannot sail directly into the wind, you want to position your own ship between the enemy and the wind. In this way, all the maneuverability is yours. The ship in the less favored or "lee" position will find itself at a decided disadvantage in maneuvering. However, as a ship with the weather

gauge approaches, the ship in the lee position can back sail and attempt its own raking maneuver.

Boarding in actual combat was a very costly maneuver. Many battles were decided on the basis of what happened on the grappled decks. We found that using the variable screens to increase by a factor of three the resulting casualties from the animated swordfighting seemed to better reflect historical battles.

While the majority of historical battles were fought on immense fleet-against-fleet lines, this computer version can only simulate two ships at a time. But there are enough historical two-ship battles to keep even the most exact wargamer happy and the ability to design and then fight ships is a decided plus. Perhaps SSI will someday release a version allowing for multiple ships per side — but that is just about the only major improvement that could be made to this game which deserves the often misused title of "classic."

Of *all* the wargames I have seen, both on the computer screen and the gaming table, *Broadsides* seems to me to best capture the flavor, the excitement and the actual reality behind the battle being simulated.

And now, if you'll excuse me, I understand that the tall ship *U.S.S. Constitution* is in need of an experienced Captain. . . .

(Neil Shapiro)

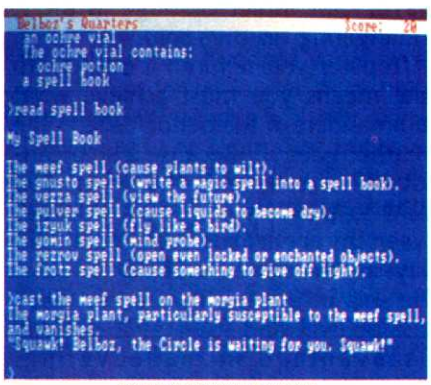
PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE

SORCERER

Infocom/Most computers/32K Disk

Chapter two in Infocom's thaumaturgical adventure series, **Sorcerer** is a worthy sequel to **Enchanter,** as well as a fine game in itself. Giving players the benefit of the doubt, Infocom has promoted the player for vanquishing the evil Krill in the earlier game — not something everyone can claim.

No longer a mere apprentice mage, the gamer even gets a private room in the headquarters of the Guild of Enchanters. There's not much time to enjoy this luxury, however, because on awakening the new wizard discovers that everyone else has left headquarters. While most of them have accompanied Frobar to town to prepare for the upcoming Guild picnic, your old friend and mentor, Belboz — long head of the guild — seems to have disappeared with a less innocuous itinerary. Investigation of his room indicates that his departure was rather sudden — his afternoon tea is cooling in the cup and his parrot is muttering ominous things to himself. (This parrot, by the way, is something of a quick study, so it pays to listen to what he has to say. "Pollibar wants a cracker" is only one of them.)


Belboz's Quarters
Score: 20
an ochre vial
The ochre vial contains:
ochre potion
a spell book
>read spell book
My Spell Book
The meef spell (cause plants to wilt).
The gnusto spell (write a magic spell into a spell book).
The vezza spell (view the future).
The pulver spell (cause liquids to become dry).
The izyuk spell (fly like a bird).
The yomin spell (mind probe).
The rezrov spell (open even locked or enchanted objects).
The frotz spell (cause something to give off light).
>cast the meef spell on the morgia plant
The morgia plant, particularly susceptible to the meef spell,
and vanishes.
"Squawk! Belboz, the Circle is waiting for you. Squawk!"

SORCERER (INFOCOM)

Unlike its predecessor, *Sorcerer* does not provide a handy loaf of bread or jug of water, so the gamer must discover some other way of staving off starvation. However there is in this game an encyclopedia which the curious gamer will find very useful for looking up more complete information on anything unusual or obscure.

The packaging is not as flamboyant as in some other Infocom adventures like **Planetfall** and **Infidel** but, as usual, it's witty and helpful. A handy item is the Infotator, a reference wheel which, among other things, helps players familiarize themselves with the bizarre and often dangerous fauna that populate the countryside. In addition, the enchanter has a trusty spell book. These and old-fashioned wits should win through to a successful conclusion eventually, although novices may want to refer to the thoughtfully provided current issue of *Popular Enchanting.* The player starts with a spell book that has a few incantations to begin with, including a couple that any thaumaturge worth his salt has permanently memorized, and one which allows mindreading. Other spells, and some magic potions, can be found throughout the game. Spell use is the same as in *Enchanter* — memorization is necessary before casting. However, you can memorize a spell more than once for multiple use over a period of time. The gamer will also need money — one Zorkmid, to be exact — and there are no banks.

The player may feel that there is one too many logical puzzles in *Sorcerer,* which could lead to frustration (not to mention repeated re-booting). The "tricky" bits seem a bit less straightforward — not necessarily more difficult —than in *Enchanter* or, say, *Infidel.*

While *Sorcerer* seems less lighthearted than *Enchanter,* it is, on the whole, an excellent adventure game — carrying all the hallmarks of humor and the unexpected that Infocom provides. Solving puzzles, casting spells at appropriate times and full exploration are the main points of play. Little actual violence is required of the gamer, although he may find himself on the receiving end if there is a miscalculation.

The search for Belboz takes the player through some very diversified real estate — incorporating almost everything from coal mines and amusement parks to glass mazes and abandoned forts. It will also lead to Jeear — an evil demon who makes Krill look like a benevolent uncle. In fact, the threat hanging over the land this time seems substantially more serious than in *Enchanter.* Still, there could be another promotion in a successful solution — and don't be afraid to stoop to petty theft. After all, you are out to save the world from unspeakable horror.

(Louise Kohl)

DALLAS QUEST

Designed by James Garon
DateSoft/Commodore 64/Disk

This illustrated adventure proves that improved technology isn't the automatic answer to every problem. Though the program dresses up its storyline with leap-out-of-the-screen animated sequences and timely sound effects, its weakness is that it isn't a very close simulation of the characters and situations which make "Dallas" a Friday night viewing habit for millions.

The principal limitation is that the

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* **ANSWER:** Al Hodge played Captain Video; Don Hastings was Ranger.

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The cast of "Dallas", now stars of a computer adventure, in a rare calm moment.

plotline takes the computerist very far afield from the TV series' center stage at Southfork, and removes opportunity for much interaction between the protagonist and the various characters of "Dallas" in the process. Worse still, the sentence parser frustrates any attempt to converse with another human with a terse, "Actions speak louder than words." The fact is, the computer representation of such familiar faces as Sue Ellen Ewing, who hires the player to track down a big strike the late Jock Ewing may have made prior to his South American crash, Lucy Ewing and Ray Krebs are almost unrecognizable. JR fares better, but accurately capturing the likenesses of the video stars seems pretty basic to a program of this type.

The story itself has many twists and turns, and some leeway about the order in which the various sub-tasks are completed. Periodic bottlenecks — places that prevent any attempt to retrace steps and thus correct errors — must be watched, especially at the point at which the hero leaves Southfork to actually begin the search. The logic of the situation is generally maintained well, though there's a tendency for the author to reach for a *deus ex machina* which no adventurer could possibly figure out unaided. The computerist may also ask for help up to nine times during the game, and the hints are frequently a big, big push in the right direction.

Apart from the accuracy of the renditions of "Dallas" stars, the artwork is quite good. Sometimes more detail appears in the display window, which occupies approximately half of the screen area, than is reflected in the accompanying text. This results in seeing objects or situations which you, as the player, may not really be able to affect. This will hardly be a novel experience for those who've played a few illustrated adventures, however.

One very worrisome bit of business occurs early in the game which must be mentioned. It is absolutely incredible that the program requires the hero to take an envelope containing valuable football tickets off a table in Southfork's entrance hall and give it to a character who, somewhat inexplicably, rewards the player for this questionable deed. Unless our protagonist is supposed to be on the shady side of the law — such as in a game in which the computerist assumes the role of a spy or secret agent — he or she should not be forced to commit patently illegal acts.

Once you get past the fact that **Dallas Quest** isn't very closely tied to the show, it turns out to be somewhat entertaining and reasonably challenging.

(Arnie Katz)

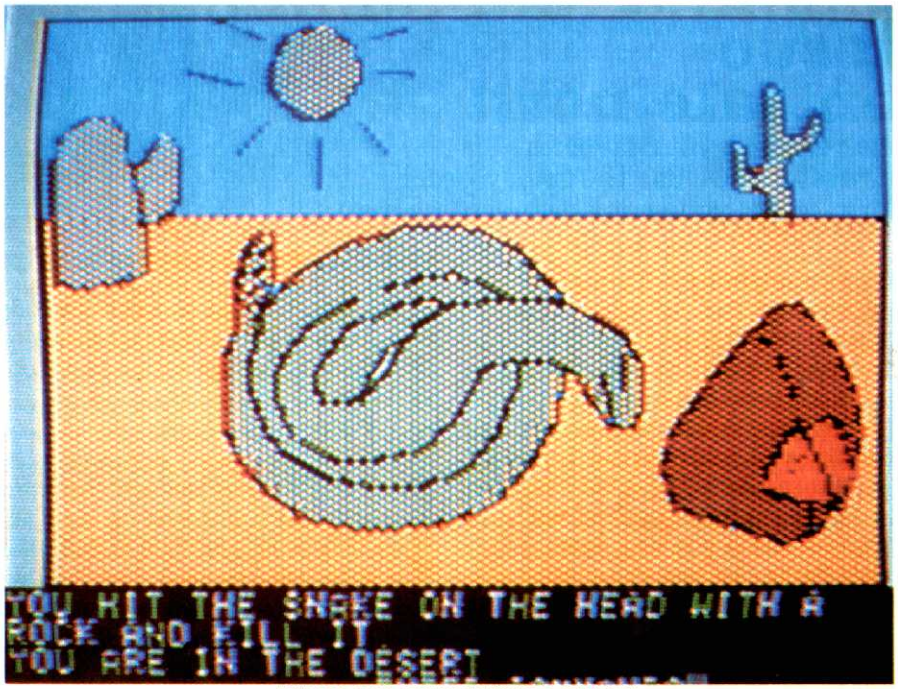
WIZARD AND THE PRINCESS

Sierra On-Line/IBM PC jr/Disk

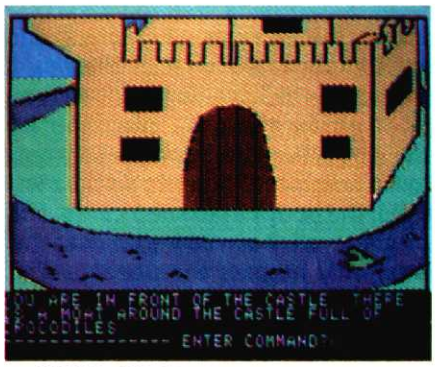
This adaptation of one of On-Line's older graphic adventures for the IBM PCjr looks pretty much the way it did on the Apple and Atari. The problem with this translation by Chris Iden and Jeff Stephenson lies mainly with the awful documentation. For example, in the instruction sheet, authors Iden and Stephenson list a selection of "wise commands". Let us quote:

"Sometimes you may wish the computer to take direct action. Example: you might try the command, 'CUT TREE'."

Well, you *might* command it, but the program won't have a clue about what you mean, since "cut" isn't part of its limited vocabulary. Then there's the matter of listing what you've got. Try typing "INV" (for "inventory") as suggested here and you'll get your inventory, all right. Unfortunately, the disk freezes once it has listed what



WIZARD AND PRINCESS (SIERRA ON-LINE)



WIZARD AND PRINCESS (SIERRA ON-LINE)

you're holding — I was forced to cut bait and dump the entire game. Several attempts garnered the same results.

While two years may not seem all that long ago, this 1982 title plays like something from the Dark Ages, especially in light of newer adventures, which not only utilize sustained logic, but communicate in passable English as well!

Players are treated to a taste of what's in store in the very first sequence of events. There are only two paths out of Serenia, the town from which you begin the quest: north and south. To the north sits a rattlesnake and a rock that's too big to lift. Southbound travelers get lost in the desert where (aha!) a smaller rock awaits. Behind that rock, however, a scorpion sits, prepared to end this adventure prematurely. Now, since the gamer starts out armed with, among very few other things, a blanket and a pocket knife, the options are fairly limited. Let's try facing the snake with a "THROW KNIFE". Too small a knife, the computer tells us. Okay, so we turn around, creep up on Mr. Scorpion and issue the same command. Now the program innocently informs us that it doesn't know what we're talking about. Huh? What's bad for a snake should be, if not good, at least *comprehensible* when laid on a scorpion, no? The same results are produced when such seemingly simple instructions as "DROP BLANKET" are issued.

This stuff gets old *very* quickly.

Considering the still-limited PCjr library, ardent adventures may want to take a shot at this, but frankly, while **Wizard and the Princess** may not be all that ancient, it sure seems that way!

(Bill Kunkel)

THINK TANK

SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD

Designed by Ozark Softscape
Electronic Arts/Atari computers/48K Disk

Sail the unknown seas in the hope of fame and fortune in a solitaire action-strategy game brilliantly crafted by the same design team that produced the 1984 Arcade Award winner **M.U.L.E.** Ozark is obviously a unit on the rise, because the fluid play-action, exceptional animated graphics and painstaking attention to detail and nuance of **Seven Cities** are significantly improved over the group's previous effort.

The program can generate two types of environments. You can cross the Atlantic to explore the New World as it existed circa 1492, or a special hemisphere generator can create a "what if?" scenario through application of geological and sociological principles. The latter has the advantage of smoothing the edge resulting from whatever you remember from all those U.S. geography lessons in school.

The simulation begins in Europe, where the player must outfit an expedition. The Royal Court sometimes grants a loan to speed you forward. The next phase involves sailing the fleet across the ocean and finding something without knowing the longitude.

Reaching land permits the option of dropping anchor and sending out an expedition. Such parties earn players points for making discoveries such as the sources of rivers, contacting natives and amassing gold. A visit to court back in Europe lets the gamer see a rating for the voyage just completed and for the game as a whole. A compaign can be saved from play-session to play-session, or a new game can be initiated with either a new or the existing hemisphere.

The joystick-operated native interaction phase is not only a triumph of computer graphics, it is almost a game in itself. After entering a village, an expedition may try a variety of strategies ranging from bribery with gifts to wholesale murder to achieve desired objectives. Credit the designers with sensitivity for making a bloody-handed approach to dealing with indigenous civilizations something other than an expressway to glory. Killing the natives *can* work — let's face it, several countries had pretty good success with hard tactics —but it also leads to mounting resistance, heavy casualties for the expedition and a reprimand from the sovereign back at home.

And if bribes and force fail, you can always do something to amaze the locals into submission.

Seven Cities of Gold is fascinating, sophisticated and yet easy to learn. And that makes this disk worth considerably more than its weight in precious metal to any computer gamer.

(Arnie Katz)

SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD (ELECTRONIC ARTS)

ENTERTAINMENTS

PUZZLE MANIA

Designed by Frank Messina
Reader's Digest/Apple/48K Disk

Puzzle Mania lets the computerist complete seven jigsaw puzzles with a choice of six levels of difficulty. At the easiest level, the picture is missing nine pieces. The player, using keyboard control, tries to place each piece. Help is available if needed. At the most difficult setting, there are 36 blanks in the puzzle, and the gamer gets only one try to place each piece before time runs out, with no hints.

The pictures vary a great deal, from low-res bucolic scenes to complex geometric designs. When the gamer grows tired of the seven original paintings, there's even provision for turning any low-res graphic design from another disk into a puzzle, so that unlimited numbers of pictures are available to the avid jigsawer. A paintbox option lets the gamer use up to 16 colors to paint in changes on the on-screen pictures.

Placing a piece in its correct spot earns a cheery "good work" notice on screen, and finishing the picture elicits a chorus of "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Puzzle Mania is a lot of fun for jigsaw lovers of all ages. The graphics are bright, so the pieces are easy to see. The levels of difficulty make it a good contest even for fairly skilled players. And perhaps best of all, completing a picture on screen ends forever the problem of lost puzzle pieces.

(Joyce Worley)

AEROBICS

Spinnaker/Atari, C-64/48K Disk

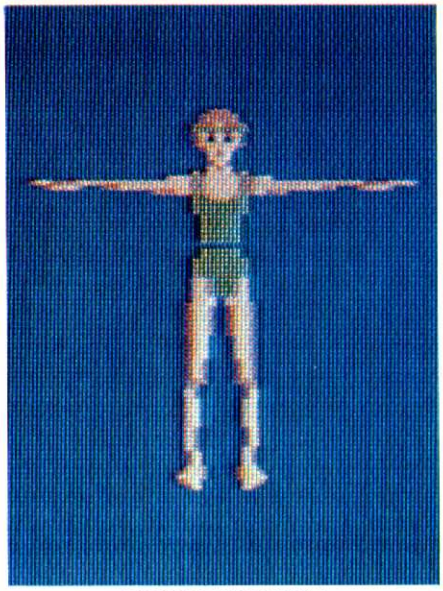
Run in place. Bounce, bounce, bounce! Stretch that waist! Once more, to your left.

Spinnaker's **Aerobics** for the Commodore 64 and Atari computers will have you doing that and much more as it is a comprehensive, well-organized fitness program.

Interactive Picture Systems, the creator of *Aerobics,* has done quite a remarkable job of producing a self-improvement package that stretches the boundaries of software's usefulness.

Providing three levels of a complete workout (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced) as well as fifteen "a la carte" routines that concentrate on certain areas of the body, this program can be used by anyone, regardless of their current physical condition.

A well-illustrated manual lists the specific area exercises, thoroughly explains the on-screen label displaying current routine, section part, and exercise number, and provides tips on form, breathing, dress and timing. It's all here.



AEROBICS (SPINNAKER)

Other sections provide step-by-step instructions and line drawings to aid users in clarifying several moves made by the on-screen video fitness buff comprised of two upper and lower halves "joined" at the waist. (Besides producing a very limber figure, this graphics setup also makes for some strange contortionist-like maneuvers never destined for duplication by a normal human being.)

The unusual moves and on-screen petiteness of the instructor take some getting used to, though watching the routines before working out with them eliminates any problems in following her lead.

One of the best aspects of a regular aerobics class is the snappy music that leads, encourages and just plain enables most people to enjoy a workout they would otherwise disdain. Likewise, one of the most impressive parts of *Aerobics* is the quality, variety, and originality of its musical score.

Despite the tremendous selection of routines (including warmup and cool-down), the exceptional graphics, and the superb audio effects, there is a problem which can't be overcome through familiarity: the lengthy disk access time between the sections. For an aerobics regimen to do the most good, the body has to keep going. Too long a wait between exercises (as here) only negates the benefits. This problem is far worse on the C-64 than on the faster-loading Atari disk.

However, *Aerobics* is too good a program to have a really serious fault. Even the access time problem can be overcome by extending the last routine (or another) until the new section is loaded and underway.

All right you slouches, stretch and hop, side to side, then do 20 jumping jacks. Can you feel the burn?

(Ted Salamone)

MUSICALC 1 SYNTHESIZER & SEQUENCER

Designed by Richard Wolton
Waveform Corp./Commodore 64/Disk

It's said there's a little musician in all of us, so the **MusiCalc** program is just the thing to give voice to that talent. Even people with no musical background can sound good minutes after booting the disk. But the strength of the program really lies in its versatility. The special features included in *MusiCalc* also make it a useful composition tool for skilled musicians.

The program turns the C-64 into a music synthesizer. It generates a wide variety of voices, and lets composers create music with up to three parts, with a different sound and score for each. Would-be musicians can play preset melodies, or write their own compositions, using the console just like a piano keyboard. The built-in sequencer sets rhythm, and controls the timing of songs when they are played back, according to the choices of the musician. Less talented musical hopefuls can take bits and pieces of the various preset melodies and rhythms to compose their own masterpieces.

Three menu screens provide access to the synthesizer controls, presets and the keyboard. The owner's manual leads aspiring song writers step-by-step through its intricacies, with exercises to help computerists get familiar with the features. The Commodore's sound capabilities are tested to the limit, and the result is a full-voiced synthesizer with exceptional

clarity and beauty of tone.

Not an easy program to master, *MusiCalc* is a synthesizer to grow with. From the moment it's booted up, computerists can begin to have fun using the quick start options, and playing around with the preset sequences. There's a terrific variety of these presets, ranging from Bach to rock. But that's only the beginning. The manufacturer boasts that there's a lifetime of learning available with this high-tech instrument with its virtually endless capabilities.

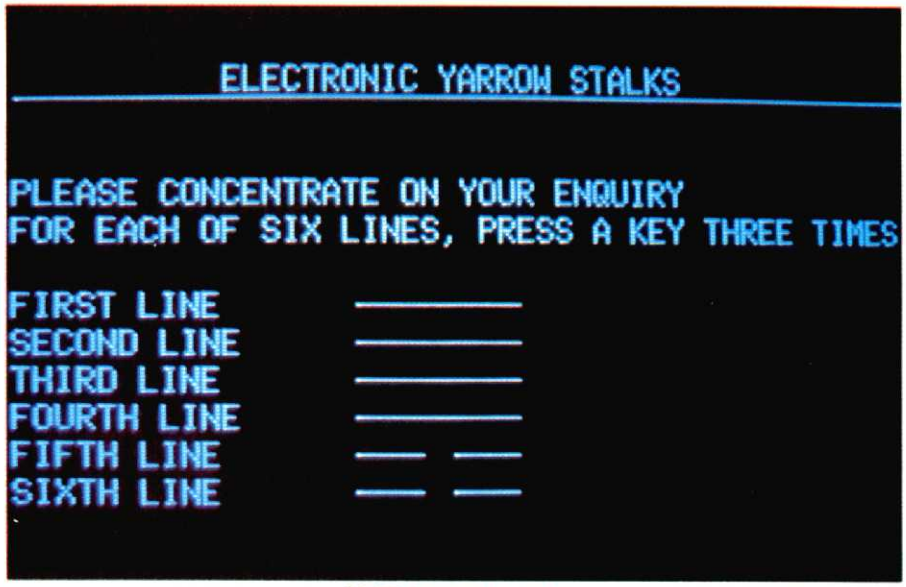
(Joyce Worley)

SOOTHSAYER

Warlock Software/Apple II/Disk

While there's a lot of software around to help out with trivial matters such as balancing a checkbook, writing a paper or saving the world from alien domination, the *really* important things have been left to less reliable means. For example, how could a computer help decide what college to go to or who to marry? Up until recently, people could deal with questions of this kind only by some painful soul-searching or by reading newspaper astrology columns. Now, however, there's **Soothsayer** to take some of the worry out. After all, two heads are proverbially better than one, especially if one of them is a computer.

And *Soothsayer* is no fly-by-night program—it comes backed by several thousand years of "Oriental wisdom" in the form of the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*, a treasure house of foresight and advice. Traditionally, whoever wanted information from the *I Ching* threw yarrow stalks to get a hexagram of six broken and unbroken lines. About the only modernization to hit the *I Ching* until this program was the move to coin throwing, yarrow sticks being in somewhat short supply. The configuration of lines then leads the seeker to the relevant section in the *I Ching* and answers are forthcoming. In a manner of speaking. While people have relied on and sung the praises of the *I Ching* for centuries, one thing no one ever claimed was that it was straightforward or explicit in its advice. The answers abound in references to "moving lines", obscure rivers and animals and delphic utterances.



SOOTHSAYER (WARLOCK)

Soothsayer preserves this traditional inscrutability, but takes some manual labor out of the process. The computerist with a problem can punch keys or throw coins (or yarrow stalks, if they happen to be available) while concentrating on the question to be answered — just *think* while doing. When all the preliminaries are over, the answer shows up on-screen with all obscurities intact. Wading through and interpreting is up to the seeker. As the *I Ching* often says, "There is no blame" or "There will be no occasion for repentance." This is reassuring — and no more arcane than some other things that are apt to show up on computer screens.

(Louise Kohl)

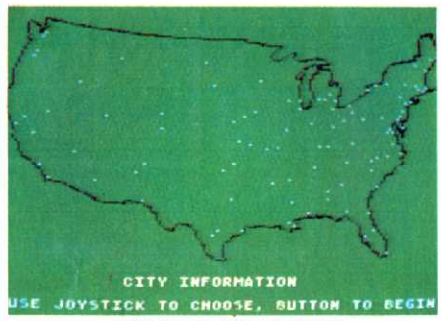
PLAYING IT SMART

AGENT U.S.A

Designed by Omar Khudari and Tom Snyder Scholastic Wizware/Atari computers/48K Disk

An alien is terrorizing the land. Its touch turns people into fuzzy static, and they infect others they contact. Unless the blight is halted, the entire country will soon be fuzzed out! It's up to **Agent USA** to locate the Fuzz Bomb doing the damage, subdue it with anti-fuzz crystals, and rescue the citizens.

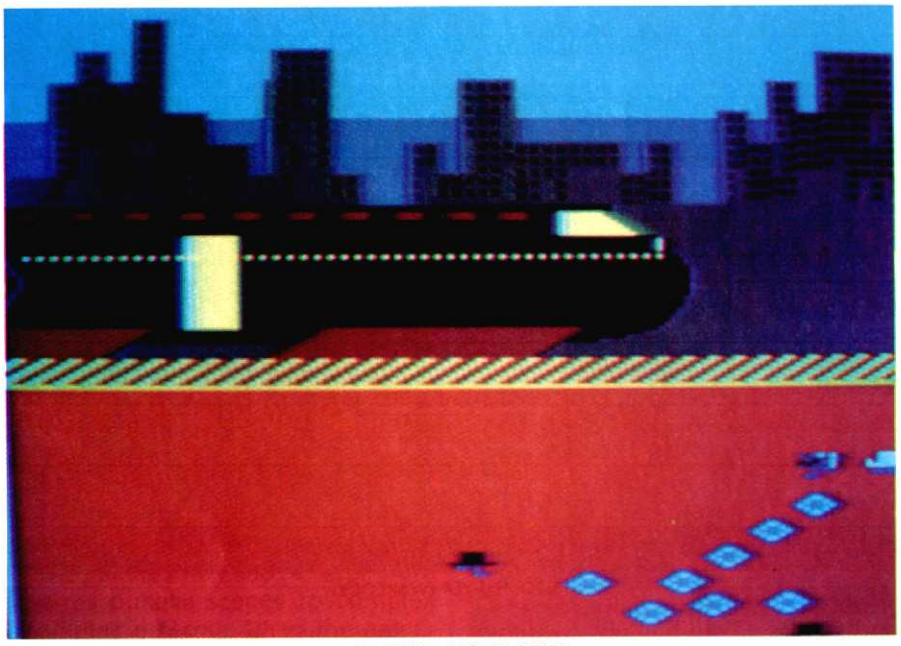
By visiting the information booth located in each state's capital city, Agent USA can see a map showing Fuzz-Bomb's location and predicting the direction in which the Fuzz menace will spread. With such an urgent mission at hand, gamers might expect to be jetting to the site, but for unclear reasons the on-screen hero rides the railroad network crisscrossing the country. It's not possible to buy a ticket direct to where Fuzz Bomb is. Instead, Agent USA must take a series of short rides between major cities until he reaches the ultimate destination.



AGENT USA (SCHOLASTIC)

The railway stations' graphics are very attractive, with both local and express trains arriving every few moments on the busy tracks. Agent USA is a cute pair of feet emerging from under an oversized fedora. The cityscapes forming the skylines are lighted according to the time of the day, dawn to dusk, and the musical accompaniment to the train rides is especially pleasing.

Designed for players aged 9 and over, *Agent USA* requires careful strategy to stop the Fuzz Bomb before it turns the country's entire population into static. Gamers must learn to manage their time efficiently if they are to buy tickets, catch the train in time, and grow the crystals needed to overcome the alien. The best lesson taught by the



AGENT USA (SCHOLASTIC)

game is geography. Maps of the alien's location are only in the state capitals, so the game quickly teaches the names and locations of the major cities in our country.

From a gamer's viewpoint, *Agent USA* is one of the most successful educational titles now on the market. Unlike many learning programs, it stands up well as a fun activity. And it's so good kids'll never know it's educational if you don't tell them!

(Joyce Worley)

RHYMES & RIDDLES

Designed by Dr. & Mrs. Mark Cross
Spinnaker/Atari/48K
Disk with BASIC cartridge

Rhymes & Riddles turns popular nursery rhymes, riddles and famous sayings into letter-guessing contests for kids 5 to 9. The program gives youngsters practice reading and spelling and helps them become familiar with the computer keyboard.

The program contains three games. The first asks users to complete a famous nursery rhyme. The second game poses a riddle to be solved. The third requires kids to complete a famous saying.

Nursery Rhymes displays blank spaces for the words of the first line of each poem, for the user to fill in. Guess a letter to fill each appropriate space until it's clear what words complete the text. Then the computer plays the first line of the nursery song, and displays the next row of blanks to be completed. Once all four lines of the poem are typed, the computer plays the complete song and displays a picture.

The riddles game works similiarly. The computer asks a riddle, such as "What did the road say to the bridge?" and displays blanks for the gamer to guess letters until words take shape. ("You make me cross!" is the correct answer to this puzzle.) There are over 100 riddles included in the program, all suitable for pre-teens.

The *Famous Saying* game displays blanks to be completed to reveal a line of a almanac-style wisdom, such as "All things come to him who waits", or "Haste makes waste."

The program is easy to use, but younger players will need parental instruction to get the hang of guessing the words by using letter-frequency code-breaking techniques. The simple, uncomplicated graphics and the cheerful nursery music help make *Rhymes & Riddles* a sure pleaser for young computerists.

(Joyce Worley)

TIME BOUND

Designed by Children's Television Workshop
CBS Software/C-64/Disk

Anacron is lost in time. He fell into the time machine; now it's up to the computerist to pinpoint his location for a rescue.

Time Bound leads one player, age 9 through adult, on a search through the history of eleven fields of human endeavor: air and space, time, communication, land transportation, architecture, fun and games, scientific tools, water transportation, political leaders, household items, and sports.

The player uses a time scanner to catch events, symbolized by red blips, as they fly from the center of the screen down twelve time bands. Intercepting a blip reveals the event it signifies and the year it occured i.e., the invention of the spinning wheel in 1530). The bottom of the screen reveals Anacron's current location by telling what happened in the year where he is hiding. The gamer must find the history line with the appropriate field of knowledge, then move forward or backward in time to find the missing lab technician. But the posi-

TIME BOUND (CBS)

tions of the fields of learning change with each game, so arcaders have to capture event-blips from every history line to determine where the categories are.

Speed increases as the gamer moves through time, so the best way to win is to locate each historical category, make an educated guess whether Anacron lies ahead or behind in time, then go to the 12th (unoccupied) band on screen and stay there until you near the target era. Then move to the correct history line and wait for the proper year to come up.

The graphics and play mechanics are simple. The top of the display tells what happened in the "present" year, and the event from Anacron's current address in time is shown at the bottom. The joystick moves the time scanner clockwise around the display, to intercept the even-blips shooting from the center of the screen. Touching the space bar changes the direction of travel in time. The loop of history is continuous; travelers who go back to the year 0 will then wrap around to the year 2000.

Time Bound teaches in the best way possible, by making computerists want to know more in order to play better. The search through time drills events and their dates into gamers' memories better than any textbook quiz ever could, and the thrill of the hunt keeps history buffs hunting for Anacron time after time.

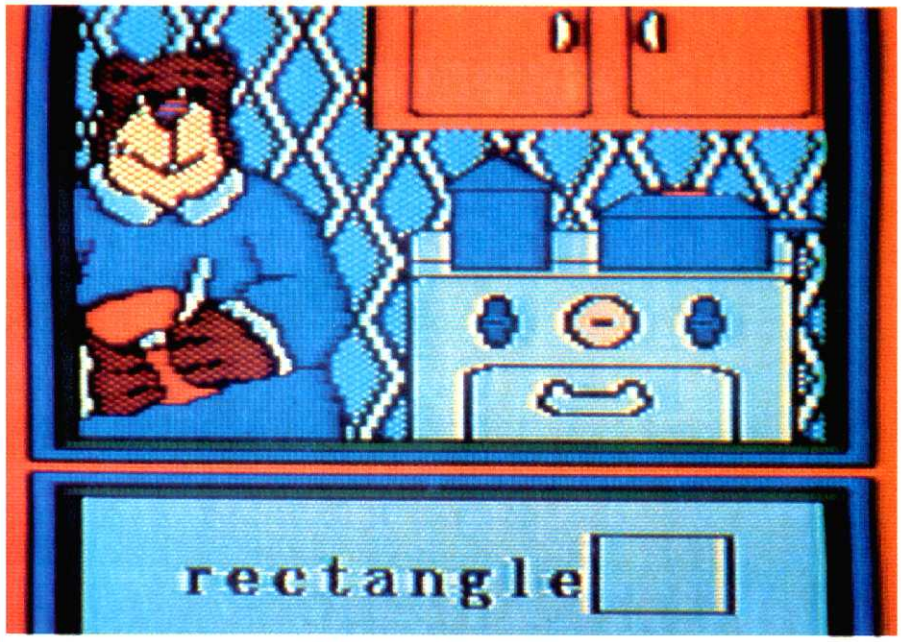
(Joyce Worley)

STICKYBEAR SHAPES

Designed by Richard Hefter, Janie & Steve Worthington
Weekly Reader Family Software/
Apple II/48K Disk

Stickybear, the lovable cartoon bruin, is back with three games to help kids 3 to 6 recognize common geometric shapes. Whimsical graphics combine with clever animation to make this learning activity fun to use, as Stickybear guides young students through simple lessons and hands-on computer experience.

The easiest game, *Pick It*, presents a picture with a missing shape. Along the bottom of the display are drawings of five geometric shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle and diamond. Select the correct one to fill in the blank space in the picture to animate the scene. For example, the parlor has a blank where the square T.V. screen should be. When the user fills in the space, the T.V. turns on with a cartoon show starring Stickybear.



STICKYBEAR SHAPES (WEEKLY READER)

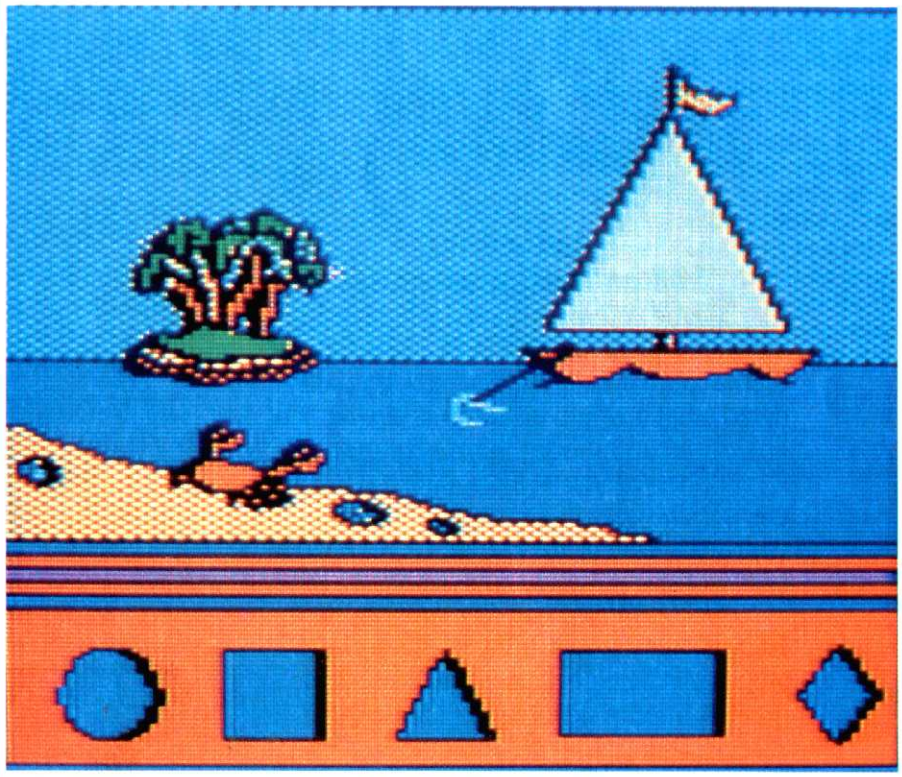
Name It teaches kids the proper names of the five shapes. The display presents a name, and the child selects the appropriate geometric from the shapes at the bottom of the screen.

Find It displays a picture that contains all five shapes. The bottom of the screen holds one form and its name, and the child selects the matching geometric in the picture to animate the scene.

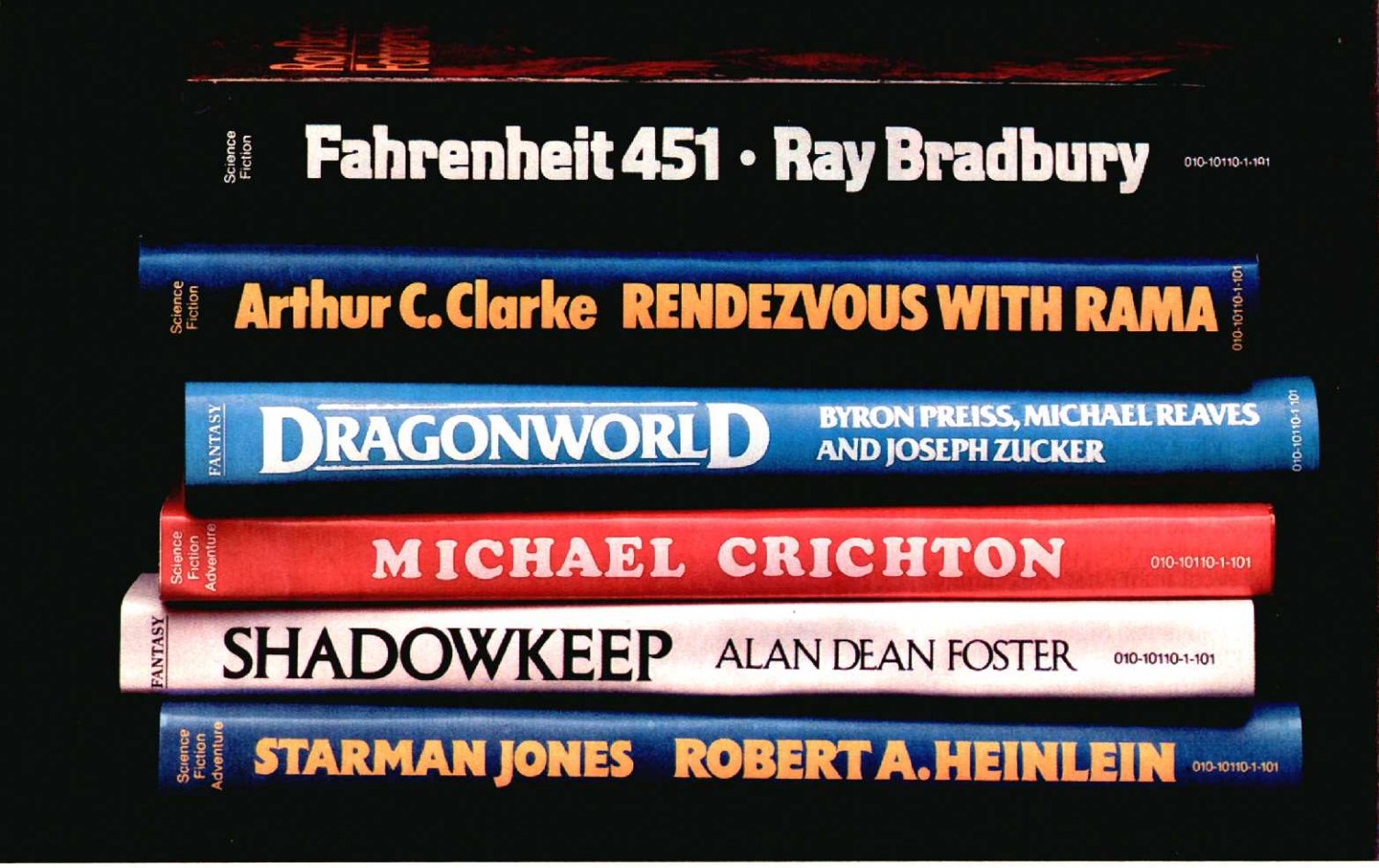
The arrow keys and space bar control all action, or **Stickybear Shapes** can be played with a paddle controller. Either way, it provides hours of colorful entertainment for kids. The program comes with a poster, some stickers, and a Richard Hefter storybook, as well as a guide for parents.

Sticky Bear is not only a good way to teach basic concepts to the younger computerist, it also gives their parents a chance to participate in the fun of learning.

(Joyce Worley)



STICKYBEAR SHAPES (WEEKLY READER)



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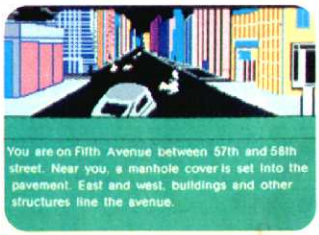
You are on Fifth Avenue between 57th and 58th street. Near you, a manhole cover is set into the pavement. East and west, buildings and other structures line the avenue.

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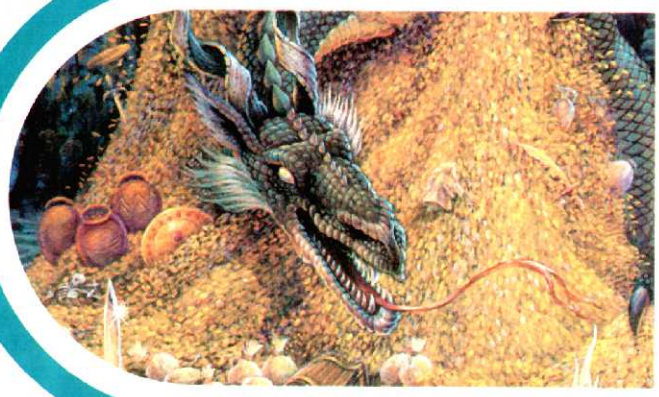


PLAYERS GUIDE TO FANTASY GAMES

COMPUTERS CONJURE ACTION FANTASIES

Since Frodo's fateful excursion to Mordor in J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings," fantasy has become an important part of American folklore. Go into any book store and you'll find a large selection of fantasy novels, their jackets painted with warlocks and warriors, dragons and damsels, hobbits, bobbits, fuzzies, and more. The genre has proven popular in the electronic gaming area as well, with an ever-increasing amount of software offering players a chance to slay dragons, explore dungeons, reclaim lost treasures or even practice the ancient arts of magic.

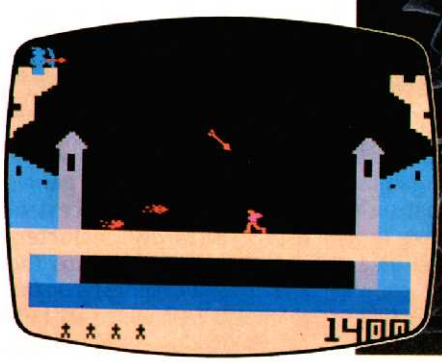
OF DEMONS AND DRAGONS

A staple of the good-versus-evil quest is the monster or monsters, which must be overcome to reach the ultimate goal of the mission. In **Dragonfire** (Imagic/Colecovision, Intellivision and Atari 2600), that creature is a full-blooded dragon, who lies in wait in the castle's treasure room. His snoutful of fire is his weapon as he guards vast riches stolen from the young Prince's family. The young hero has no sword or armor, though, and must dodge the balls of fire as he scurries to gather the goods.

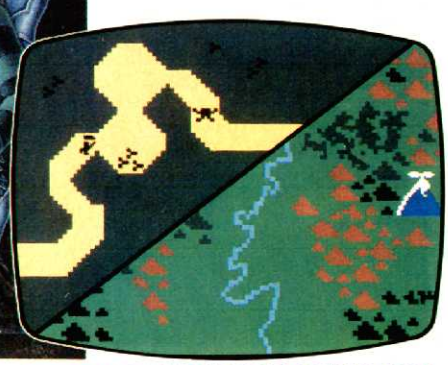
Venture (Coleco/Colecovision, Intellivision, and Atari 2600) is a three-level dungeon exploration that challenges players to find all the hidden treasures in its subterranean chambers. Different monsters guard the goods, and it takes a steady hand and well-honed sharpshooting skills to survive.

Dragons also head the list of bad guys in **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons** (Mattel/Intellivision) and **Adventure** (Atari/Atari 2600), two older titles that blend strategy and swordplay in the first cartridge quests.

Things are a bit different in **Dragonhawk** (Creative Software/Commodore 64). The gamer's on-screen identity is an intrepid hawk who must vanquish several waves of smaller (but still dangerous) creatures before facing the dragon himself.



DRAGONFIRE (IMAGIC)



ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS (MATTEL)

MYTHOS, MAGIC AND MONSTERS

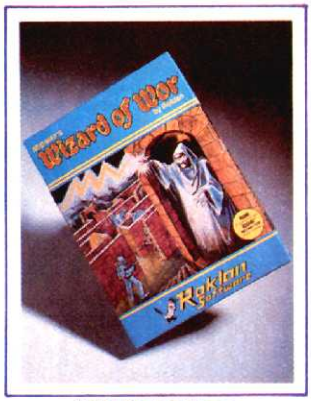
Medieval swordplay takes a flight of fancy in **Joust** (Atari, Atarisoft/Most systems), a first-rate action contest that pits armored knights, astride birds-o'-war, against friend and foe alike in an aerial free-for-all. One of the best things about this game is its head-to-head mode.

Another contest that can be played head-to-head is **Wizard of Wor** (Various companies/Most systems). Though the game's been around awhile, it's an excellent action scenario in which one or two players move around a maze, blasting a succession of raging beasts in a quest against an evil wizard.

Magic enables the **Rainbow Walker** (Synapse/Atari, C-64) to literally walk on air in an unusual color-changing game set high in the sky. The object is to restore a dull gray rainbow to its former brilliance, while keeping various air monsters at bay.

Elements of strategy combine with fast action in **Lady Tut** (California Pacific/Apple/48K Disk), an archaeological mission with adventure game overtones. This multi-level maze game is chock full of riches to find, though dangerous scarabs and snakes lurk around every corner. To reach the next level, players have to find the proper key — a task easier than it sounds.

The player's only weapons against **Zombies** (Bram/Atari, C-64) are the magic crosses that can be dropped in their paths. While the crosses don't destroy the creatures, they *do* hold them back in this strikingly-animated multi-scenario action adventure.



WIZARD OF WOR

COIN-OP QUESTING

Two of arcading's most innovative games revolve around a fantasy scenario. Exidy's **Crossbow** attracted a lot of attention with its real crossbow controller, which is used to pick off various menaces that threaten a band of travellers. The weapon is also used to choose which of several paths to follow, allowing the plot to branch out in a number of different directions.

With the imaginative visual elements fantasy is known for, it's only logical that the first laserdisc game to reach most arcades was Don Bluth's **Dragons Lair** (Starcom, formerly Cinematronics), a journey through chambers and caverns beneath a haunted castle in a mission to rescue pretty Princess Daphne.

Though Coleco paid a sizeable licensing fee to acquire home rights to **Dragons Lair,** the title has yet to appear on the home screen. Coleco has previewed a ROM cartridge version, and also promised a laserdisc module, but neither has materialized

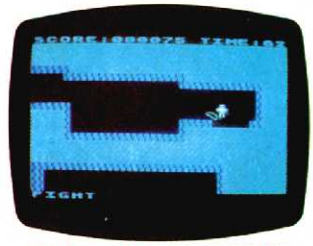
DRAGON'S LAIR (STARCOM)

INTO THE DUNGEON DEPTHS

Dungeon exploration, long a staple of non-electronic role-playing games like TSR's "Dungeons and Dragons", is fertile ground for computer adventures. All three of the **Zork** text adventures are set in underground labyrinths filled with magic and mystery.

Epyx's **Gateway to Apshai** (Atari, C-64/Cartridge) and **Sword of Fargoal** (VIC-20/cassette) are action-oriented dungeon missions. Using both joystick and function keys, the player works through the dozens of rooms on each level, avoiding or slaying various evil creatures while collecting treasures of weapons, armor, magic items and cash. The bird's-eye view of each area appears only *after* it has been entered, so keep your sword in hand at all times!

Screenplay's **Warriors of Ra** series (C-64, Atari/Disk), including **Dunzhin, Wyld Kaiv,** and **Ziggurat** adds a strong sense of realism to the action/adventure format. The games feature complex combat systems which give players the option of aiming blows at a particular part of the foe's anatomy, as well as selecting the type of attack mode to use.


GATEWAY TO APSHAI (ATARI)

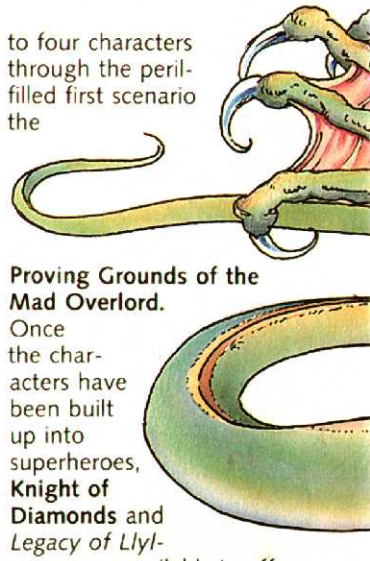
WIZARDRY III (SIR-TECH)

Humor mixes with horror in **Mabel's Mansion** (Datamost/Apple), a multi-screen action adventure in which players explore different floors of a haunted house.

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Wizardry (Sir-Tech/Apple, IBM-PC) remains extremely popular with computer adventurers who can bring up to four characters through the peril-filled first scenario the **Proving Grounds of the Mad Overlord.** Once the characters have been built up into superheroes, **Knight of Diamonds** and *Legacy of Llylgamyn* are available to offer a fresh challenge. The games have proven so successful that a *Wizardry* character-booster disk (which ups the abilities of weaklings) is on the market as well, which will better your odds — but won't guarantee success!

ZORK TRILOGY (INFOCOM)



ADVENTURES IN STRANGE LANDS

THE COMPLEAT QUEST

Each of the three **Ultima** adventures is a world unto itself, requiring no previous mastery to solve. The games feature cities, countrysides, dungeon depths and oceans to explore, plus a few extra surprises along the way. Though the original **Ultima** is showing its age just a bit, **Ultima II: Revenge of the Enchantress** (Sierra On-Line/Most computers/48K Disk) is an excellent solo adventure offering time travel. In **Ultima III: Exodus** (Origins Systems/Most computers/48K Disk) up to four characters can travel in a party, using the now-you-see-'em-now-you-don't Moon Gates to access certain areas. **Ultima IV: Quest for the Avatar** (Origins Systems/Most computers/64K Disk) is due out by this Christmas. This quest-within-a-quest will offer enriched graphics, sound and animation, as well as a map sixteen times larger than in past *Ultima* games. *Ultima IV* adventurers can look forward to mixed groups of adversaries, new monster types, wandering Gypsy camps and much more.

ULTIMA II (SIERRA ON-LINE)

GOING IT SOLO

Questron (SSI/Apple) may resemble *Ultima* on the surface, but its joystick control input sets this action quest apart. The game contains many elements traditionally found in role-playing games, including choosing character types and casting spells.

Though many characters can be stored on-disk, in **Standing Stones** (Electronic Arts/Apple, C-64) only one at a time can tough out the dungeon exploration. The object of the first-person underground adventure is to find the legendary Holy Grail, hidden at the bottommost level. Friendly types mingle with the monsters, and an oasis on the fifth level goes so far as to offer cockroach races to bet on!

PICTURING FANTASY

Fantasy is a common theme in illustrated adventure games, such as Sierra On-Line's **The Dark Crystal** (Most computers/48K Disk). In this adaptation of Jim Henson's fantasy film, a young Gelfling must find and restore the lost Shard of the crystal before the evil Skekses and their minions destroy him. This fantasy game's illustrations are well-drawn, if somewhat limited in color, and the support materials are unusually well-done. **The Blade of Blackpoole** (Sirius/Most computers/48K Disk) is a quest for a sword which lies hidden beneath a deep pool.

DARK CRYSTAL (SIERRA ON-LINE)

Penguin Software uses its graphics generation software to good effect in a pair of quest-oriented illustrated adventures, **Coveted Mirror** and **Quest.** The former sends the player looking for a hidden artifact, while the latter takes the unique tack of making the computerist the assistant of a powerful hero who must then be directed to the goal and back again.

WIZARD FOR A DAY

Magic plays an important part in Infocom's **Enchanter** (Most computers/32K Disk) and **Sorcerer** (Most computers/32K Disk), the first two full-text adventures in a planned trilogy. In *Enchanter*, players step into the shoes of a novice wizard who's been picked — by virtue of inex-

:ROW N
YOU ARE ON THE SHORE OF A SMALL ISLAND. IN FRONT OF YOU IS A PAGAN IDOL AND AN ALTAR. IT IS OBVIOUS FROM THE SURROUNDINGS THAT THIS PLACE HAS BEEN VISITED RECENTLY.
:

BLADE OF BLACKPOOLE (SIRIUS)

perience — to seek out and defeat the evil Krill. Whether the first mission is successful or not, the acolyte is promoted to a full-fledged Enchanter in *Sorcerer*. This time, Belboz, the young mage's mentor, has been kidnapped by a creature named Jearr (no relation to Mr. Ewing), who makes Krill look like a powder puff by comparison.

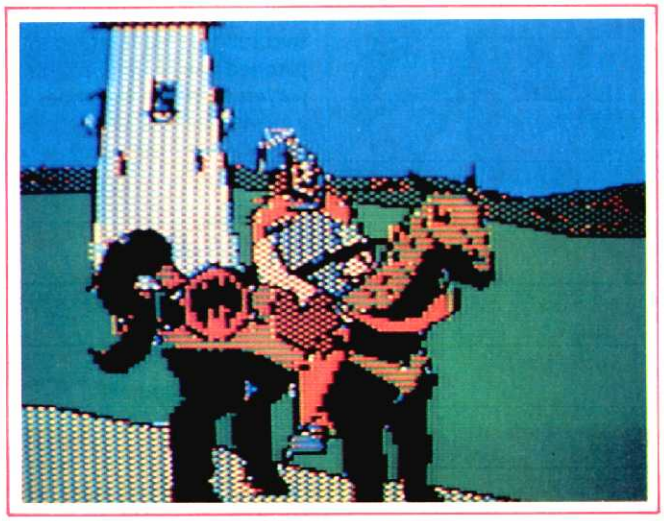
GAMES OF THE GODS?

Greek mythology is the background for Stuart Smith's **Return of Heracles** (Quality Software/Apple, C-64, and Atari/48K Disk), in which players strive to complete the legendary Twelve Labors of Hercules. There are 26 heroes to choose from, from Achilles to Hippolyte, and gamers have the option of adding or subtracting characters as they see fit. The joystick controls all movement and options, which are selected from an on-screen menu.

Zeus himself instructs the characters in which mission to accomplish, while the Oracle of Delphi gives hints commensurate with the amount of money donated to the temple. Failure to accomplish the task earns a reprimand from Zeus, while the rewards get larger with each successive victory.

BATTLE OF THE MINDS

Despite similarities to chess, **Archon** (Electronic Arts/Atari, C-64/32K Disk) wouldn't be the same without the Wizard and the Sorceress, leaders of Light and Dark forces, respectively. While lesser mythological creatures battle for possession of the squares, *Archon's* mages can heal or restore lost characters, teleport or even turn back the forces of time itself — all from the relative safety of their home power points.

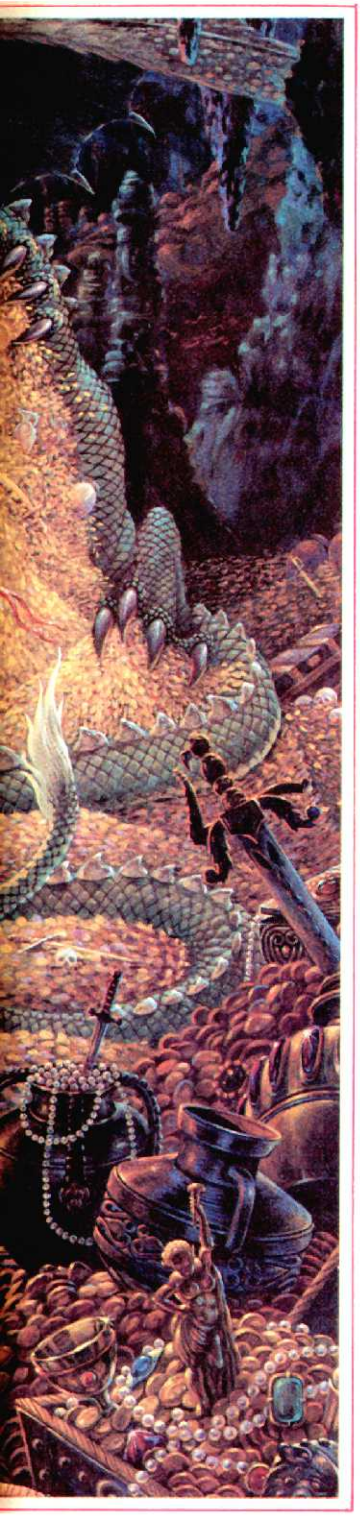


THE QUEST (PENGUIN)

Freefall Associates, the design team behind *Archon*, has come up with a sequel, *Archon II*, which should be in stores in time for the holiday buying spree. (Details on *Archon II* and other new games can be found in EG's fourth annual "Software Preview," elsewhere in this issue.)

Up to four wizards can compete at a time in **Silicon Warrior** (Epyx/Atari/16K Cartridge), a cosmic territory struggle in the outer realms. The object is to claim every territory in a row by passing over them, while keeping rival wizards from completing the task first.

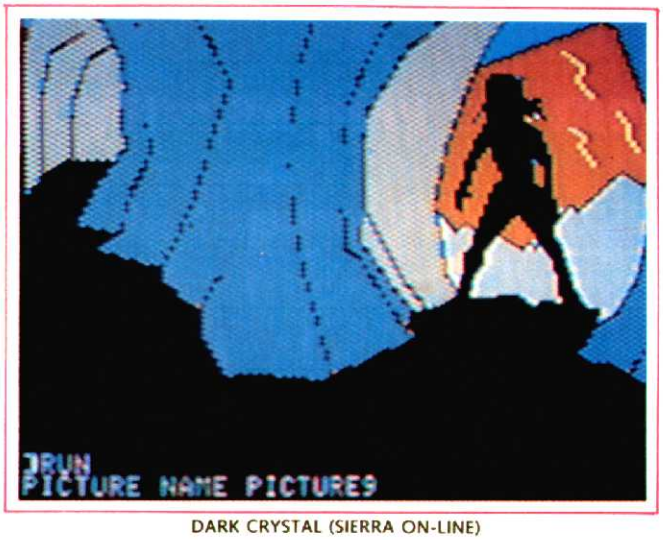
Druidic powers are set to work in **Necromancer** (Synapse/Atari, C-64/32K Disk), a two-scenario action/strategy game. In the first screen, the



mage must plant as many trees as possible, keeping various wood-eating creatures at bay while the saplings mature. When time runs out, all the fully-grown trees accompany the mage into the depths of a dungeon, where they can be animated into life and moved to danger spots.

Up to four players can compete for position and power in **Dragonriders of Pern** (Epyx/Atari, C-64/48K Disk), based on Anne McCaffrey's best-selling novels of the same name. Each player controls a Weyr (stronghold of dragons and their riders), the protectors of the realm against searing Threads that fall from the sky. In the first phase of each year, Weyrleaders attempt to form alliances with strongholds and crafthalls, which form the political core of the planet. Individuals have different personalities and must be approached according to their whims. For example, some potential allies loathe dragons, so inviting one to a dragon-hatching isn't likely to impress. In the second phase of the game, the player leads his or her Weyr into the skies in an attempt to char falling Thread before it hits the ground.

The first player to earn seven points (gained by allying with strongholds and craftmasters) wins the game. But if too much Thread has burrowed into the farm lands, the planet is considered destroyed and nobody wins. A third outcome is that the number of years selected for play have elapsed, in which case the player with the most points wins.



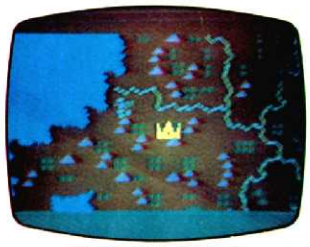
DARK CRYSTAL (SIERRA ON-LINE)

ASCENDING THE THRONE

Heavy lies the head that wears the crown, a fact driven home by **Excalibur** (Atari Program Exchange/Atari/48K Disk). The player steps into the part of King Arthur himself, whose challenge is to unite the warring factions of ancient Britain under the Pendragon banner. As in the Arthurian myth, not all the kings wish to have an untested boy as their King, so battle is inevitable.

The game is remarkably faithful to the King Arthur story. Knights arrive in court to serve the King, while Merlin stays in the shadows to offer advice. Court intrigues, including Guinevere's affair with a certain Knight of the Round Table, can affect Arthur's standing among friends and foe alike, while battle victories or losses do the same. Arthur must manage his knights effectively, plan winning battle strategies, and become a savvy politician if he hopes to win one of the most challenging mind games ever produced.

King Arthur's Heir, an older Epyx title (Atari computers/16K Disk), offers players the chance to ascend the throne—if they first please the King by collecting the proper objects. While the journey through Britain is fun, this game, which requires a BASIC cartridge to play, is very creaky around the edges.



EXCALIBUR (ATARI)

NECROMANCER (SYNAPSE)

INSERT COIN HERE

By BILL KUNKEL

On the Road with Spy Hunter

SPY HUNTER

Midway

In these days, when the coin-op companies still in business are frantically looking for something *new* in hopes that it might spark a recovery cycle, Midway's **Spy Hunter** seems out of place. Almost neo-classical in style and content, it may well be that *Spy Hunter's* conventional nature makes it stand out against the off-beat, Looking-for-Mr.-Goodgame world of contemporary coin-ops.

Spy Hunter is an auto chase contest, with vehicles of all kinds out on the road for a little ultraviolence. The action begins with the appearance of the player's weapons van, which promptly pulls over to the side of the highway and pops open its back doors. A pair of long, metal ramp-beams slide out preparatory to the appearance of the gamer's souped-up spymobile. The car then engages in a non-stop stream of moving fire fights, with everything else on the road cast as "fair game". Rounds are fired from a cannon mounted in the front of the car.

The simulated driving gear consists of steering wheel, accelerator pedal and stick-type gear shift, with firing buttons built into the wheel. Midway again uses its commendable technique of giving the player a full sixty seconds to learn the game — crashed cars are replaced without cost for the first minute — after which time everything counts.

The graphics are clean, bright and workmanlike but hardly inspiring. The overhead perspective hasn't been seen in a major automobile contest since **Rally-X** and, frankly, this new game is not as visually appealing. The audio is nothing to clean your ears out over, either, consisting as it does mostly of explosions and the monotonous drone of a vehicle in motion.

What rescues *Spy Hunter* is its exhilarating play-action and the quality of the driving simulation. The lack of optical opulence actually helps the play-mechanic, streamlining the action and keeping it from becoming cluttered.

As the car is given over to player-control, the gear should be shifted into low. After a few seconds, the vehicle can go into high gear and the game *really* heats up. At its best, *Spy Hunter* becomes a "Road Warrior"-type spectacle, an orgy of vicarious violence with skid-outs, bullets flying and cars being blown to pieces. The sense of actually driving is very good, with gears, pedal and steering wheel all possessing excellent "feel".

Unfortunately, there isn't enough substance to *Spy Hunter*. The limited and redundant scenario gets old within a few plays and even once the player begins to master the game, there isn't enough of a pay-off. *Spy Hunter* is a game that would have been *hot* a couple of years ago but seems awfully tame today. Its fresh-faced, old-fashioned vitality is refreshing, but only for so long.

Finally, for those wondering what exactly *Spy Hunter* has to do with spies and espionage, the answer is: next to nothing. *Sans* weapons van, this game could just as easily have been cast as a death-race contest. But, because of the van and the gimmicked-up automobile, it becomes a "spy" game.

If the arcade scene were bursting with great games, if players were happily dumping their quarters into slots in order to journey to the state-of-the-art, *Spy Hunter* would be a welcome, if minor, addition to the scene. As it is, *Spy Hunter* is one of the industry's top earners as this column goes to press. That tells you as much about the current coin-op scene as anybody could wish to know.

Now you can play the movie...

STAR WARS RETURN OF THE JEDI

All the flat-out action from the blockbuster movie returns in this hot new coin video experience from Atari.

The FORCE* is with you once again... You're LUKE SKYWALKER* rocketing toward the EWOK VILLAGE* on ENDOR*; CHEWBACCA* manuevering a SCOUT WALKER* toward the control bunker; and LANDO CALRISSIAN* in the MILLENNIUM FALCON* battling to destroy the Imperial DEATH STAR*.

Fantastic 3-D animation, music, sound and voice effects from the movie, plus eight levels of increasing difficulty and a new "Split-Wave" feature that switches the action between ENDOR* and space add up to nonstop challenge. Lead the REBELS* to final victory! Blast the DEATH STAR* (if you can). You are the only hope for the ALLIANCE*.

ATARI®

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FUN WITH THE 3-R'S

Learn Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic the Computer Way

By JOYCE WORLEY

The three R's, backbone of elementary school, have inspired most current educational games. Reading, writing and arithmetic dominate the first six years of the educational procedure, yet many kids still don't seem to get them down pat. Modern parents realize their children often need extra guidance if they are to become adept with these fundamental skills.

The best of the current crop of educational games actually make the three R's fun. With some computer assistance, Johnny can learn to read, write and do sums better — and so, for that matter, can his Dad. Whether you're hunting for a primary lesson for a nursery school student, or a reading program to double or triple an adult's speed, there's software tailor-made to suit your needs.

The first thing Baby needs to read is

STICKYBEAR (WEEKLY READER)

COMPUTER CRAYONS (PLAYGROUND)

the alphabet. **Stickybear** (Weekly Reader Family Software/Apple & Atari) is a child-pleasing alphabet tutor with colorful animated graphics and easy operation. Touch any letter to make an illustrative scene appear. Touch the same key again for a completely different picture. Each letter has two illustrations, all in full-color animation.

Charlie Brown's ABC's (Random House/Apple & Commodore 64) is another good preschooler alphabet program. Touch a key and the screen displays the letter in upper and lower case, with a simple illustration. For example, "f" produces a picture of a football. Hit the letter again for a cartoon of Lucy holding the football for Charlie to kick, then pulling it away at the crucial moment.

Playground Software's **Computer Crayons** (C-64, Atari) puts a different twist on the alphabet. The computer displays a picture illustrating the letter, then lets the child color it right on screen. Finally, it animates the finished scene in a multi-activity learning entertainment.

Electronic Playground (Software Entertainment Company/Most systems) prepares kids for reading by letting them match numbers, upper to lower case letters, and shapes. The game can be used by kids with no reading skills at all, and also includes a drawing and coloring activity for youngsters.

Little Red Riding Hood (Playground Software/Atari, C-64) is an interactive storybook and game designed for use with the Edumate Light Pen. It works with most other light pens equally well. By touching the on-screen cursor with the pen, the child advances the

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD (PLAYGROUND)

VIDEO

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3-R's

scenes and animates pictures. The fairy tale is narrated in clear tones, with certain key phrases printed on-screen to start the child reading.

All the pre-reader programs require some parental supervision. Once the activity is booted, though, and the control keys pointed out, even tots can enjoy them.

The **EasyReader** series (American Educational Computer/Most systems) includes several programs. **Learning About Sounds In Reading** introduces phonics to kindergarteners. It displays three pictures, and asks the user to identify the ones with similar vowel or consonant sounds. **Learning About Words In Reading** teaches students in grades 1-3 about compound words, contractions, prefixes, suffixes, etc. The last three programs, **Reading Comprehension Skills 1, 2 and 3**, are for grades 1-3, 4-6 and 7-8 respectively. They feature reading practice followed by drills to test how well students understand what they read. The clever graphics, scorekeeping and reward sequences for correct responses are moderately entertaining, but these programs don't actually involve game-play action, but instead parallel classroom curriculums.

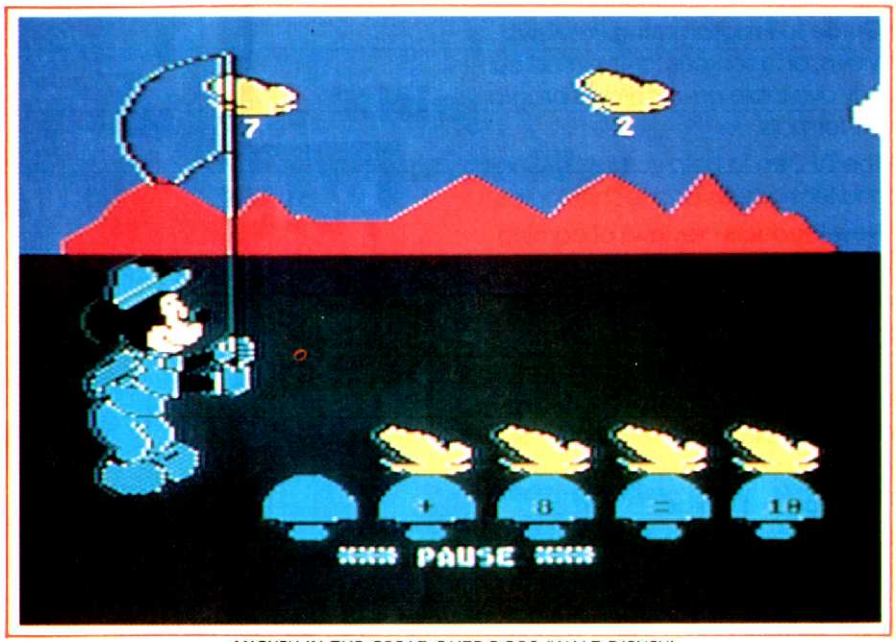
Walt Disney Productions' **Mickey In The Great Outdoors** (Atari) is a four-activity package for kids 7-10 combining easy reading lessons with grammar school arithmetic. In game one, **Mickey Goes Hiking,** Mickey Mouse faces a bridge made of five stepping stones, with words on four stones. Clouds float across the sky, each with a word, only one of which completes the sentence. If an arrow from Mickey's bow hits the right word-cloud to complete the sentence, Mickey can cross the bridge. The second activity makes Mickey unscramble a four-letter word displayed in a garden of flowers. **Mickey Goes Exploring** helps kids gain arithmetic skills. A problem, like 2 + 4 = 6, is displayed with one number or operation omitted. Four butterflies flit overhead, each with a number or operation symbol, and Mickey must net the one that completes the equation. The last activity teaches kids to recognize patterns of numbers. Six lily pads across the bottom of the screen carry a sequence of numbers to be completed. (For example, 5, 10, 15, 20, followed by two blanks.) Another row of lily pads carries seven numbers. Mickey paddles a canoe across the lake, as a frog hops from pad to pad. Line up Mickey's canoe with the correct answer. Then, when the frog hops on the right pad, tag it with the oar to complete the sequence.

Spinnaker's **Hey Diddle Diddle** (Most systems), for kids 3-10, features three activities based on nursery rhymes. The **Storytime** option, for the youngest users, shows each poem, with pictures and music for the parent to read to the child. The **Storybook** option is for older tots. It displays the first verse of the rhyme, draws a picture and plays music, but the child must press a button to see the next verse. The final activity is the **Rhyme Game**. The computer displays a scrambled rhyme. The player must reposition the lines.

Word Flyer (Electronic Arts) is a recognition game for all ages. Lower levels teach the alphabet by sailing letters through the sky for the child to match. Upper levels require the gamer to match whole words.

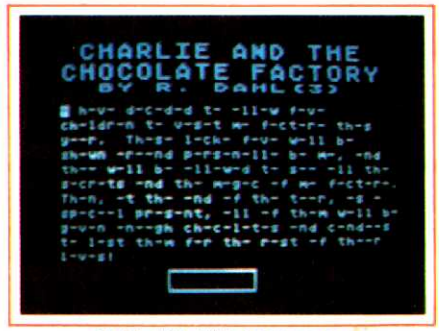
M-ss-ng L-nks, (Sunburst/Most systems), helps improve reading comprehension and spelling for anyone 9 or over. The player selects passages from well-known children's books, which are printed with certain letters omitted. The easiest format omits the vowels from each word. Other skill settings print every other letter, the first letter in each word, every other word, only the vowels, the last letter of each word, the first word of each sentence, or just blanks to show where letters go. The most difficult format prints only the title and author, with no words at all. The puzzles are easy enough for grade schoolers at low levels, but a very difficult memory test at the top difficulty.

Chatterbee (Tronix/Atari, C-64) uses a computer voice to help kids learn to spell without need of speech



MICKEY IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS (WALT DISNEY)

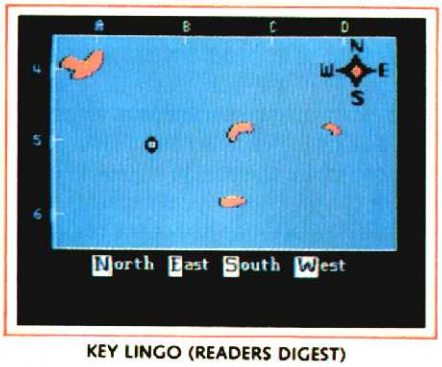
HEY DIDDLE DIDDLE (SPINNAKER)



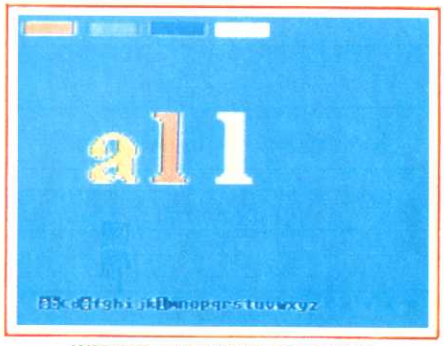
M-SS-NG L-NKS (SUNBURST)

synthesis equipment. *Chatterbee* announces a word, then uses it in a sentence, and repeats the word again. Points are awarded depending on how many tries it takes the computerist to spell the word correctly. The game has 25 levels, starting with first-grade words. At its top skill setting, it could stump a lexicographer.

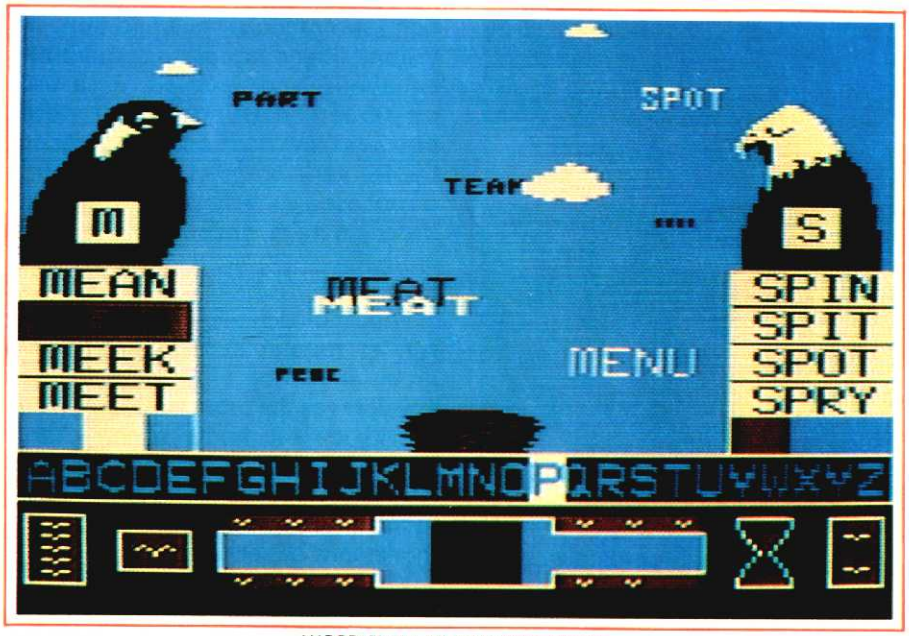
Key Lingo (Reader's Digest Software/Apple, IBM-PC), casts gamers age 11 and over as skippers on cargo ships. Players sail cartoon vessels around the ocean, stop at islands to trade, buy, or sell words to replenish their cargo holds, then barter words for coconuts. The one- to four-player game and promotes increased vocabulary and spelling skills.



KEY LINGO (READERS DIGEST)



WEBSTER: THE WORD GAME (CBS)



WORD FLYER (ELECTRONIC ARTS)

All writers know that word skills are the basis of their art, and there are a large variety of games to build vocabularies for young authors. **Webster: The Word Game** (CBS Software/Most systems), prints a word at the top of the screen, with key letters deleted. As the word moves down the screen, the player controls an animated hand moving across the alphabet. Stop the hand over the correct letters to fill in the blanks. It's designed for learners age 6 and up, so it starts very easy, but the words gradually get more complex, and they descend faster.

Spinnaker's **Story Machine** (Atari and C-64) makes kids into budding journalistic stars. The program contains a 40-word vocabulary which can be used to write simple stories with accompanying graphics. For example, the child may write "The boy dances near the girl." The screen displays cartoons of the boy and girl on-screen, then the boy dances across the screen until he's next to the girl. The child can watch a story created by the computer or write one of his own. This is a very easy program to use, and helps kids get more familiar with the keyboard as they learn to write correct sentences.

Kidwriter (Spinnaker/Apple, C-64) is for slightly older grade school students. Choosing from a menu of objects stored on disks, the child puts together a colorful picture, then writes a short story about the scene in his or her own words. There are 99 different items in the picture bank, and several backgrounds ranging from outer space to seascapes. A built-in simplified word processor lets users correct errors, erase sections, or insert new parts.

KIDWRITER (SPINNAKER)

In addition to increasing verbal skills by teaching better letter and word recognition, some computer programs actually help youngsters with the physical act of writing. **Alphabet Construction Set** (Playground Software/Atari, C-64), teaches preschoolers to print. The computer carefully traces a block-style letter on half the screen and the child copies it with a light pen. The program analyzes the letter and points out any needed corrections.

Kids On Keys, (Spinnaker/Atari, C-64), gets children 3-9 familiar with the computer keyboard. In the first game, a word balloon floats down the screen and the child must type the same word before the image disappears. Game two makes the learner write the name of an object moving down the screen. It encourages kids to identify numbers, letters and words, and gets them started typing.

Typing Tutor III (Simon & Schuster/Apple and C-64) is a complete touch-typing instruction program that individualizes each student's lessons by monitoring response time and error rate. It uses on-screen prompts and explanations so that a beginner can boot up the disk and get started immediately without reading a manual. The practice sessions offer word and number drills and standard speed tests. The game **Letter Invaders** makes computerists type the on-screen letters before they descend to the bottom of the screen. It's a good exercise for gamers who want to improve their typing since the speed constantly increases to challenge even top gamers.

One of the most unusual aids for would-be writers is **StoryTree** (Scholastic Wizware/IBM PC & PCjr, Apple). It lets kids (or grownups) write

compositions with multiple story lines. At the end of each page, the computer offers the writer the option of continuing to the next page, or going on to an alternate plot line.

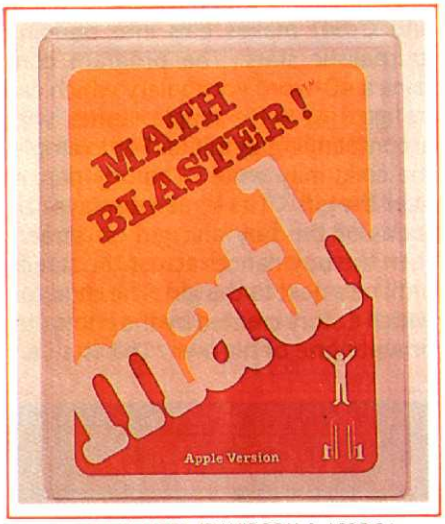
Arithmetic can be a lot easier to learn from a hot computer game, and there are programs for every age based on mathematical skills. Start babies ages 3-6 with **Stickybear Numbers,** an illustrated display that teaches counting from zero to 10. Colorful groups of objects demonstrate each digit. The program comes with some stickers, a poster, and even a counting book for baby to browse, as well as special documentation for the parent.

Screenplay's **Playful Professor** (Atari, C-64) is for kids from 5 to 12. A ghost dances from room to room in a magic castle holding a golden key. To escape, players must solve math problems in order to move closer to the key which unlocks the door. Wrong responses produce an explanation of the problem by the Professor using chalk and blackboard to instruct the student. The program gets more difficult as the child improves, and includes addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, as well as instruction in fractions.

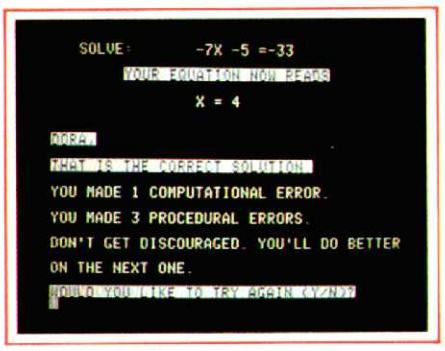
Trap-A-Zoid (DesignWare/Most systems) lets kids use geometric concepts by connecting dots to form shapes to trap Zoids (creatures from outer space). The player selects which geometric category to use (such as triangles, rectangles, polygons and quadrangles), and the speed at which the Zoids move across the screen.

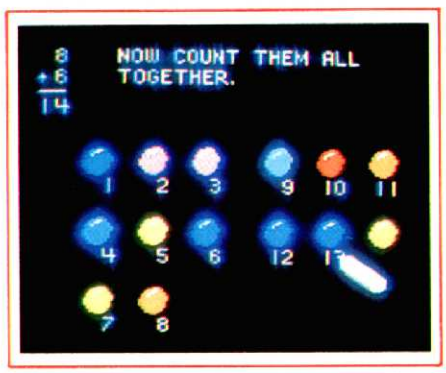
Math Mileage (CBS Software/Atari and C-64) is for ages 6-10, and combines the fun of race car driving with mental arithmetic. Kids steer their formula race cars as they try to accumulate points to match the goal set by the computer for that round. Each fork of the road produces additions or subtractions (and, in upper levels, multiplication and division) and players choose which way to go in order to reach their goal in as few turns as possible. There's even a night driving option to make the trip more challenging.

Control Data also visited the race track for inspiration for **Basic Number Facts** (Apple, Atari, TI-99/4a). The game leads an elementary student through a series of races, using an animated track format with two cars. Each contest has 10 problems to solve, and the races are run individually. The student wins the race when he beats the opponent car's time — actually the user's own time from a previous race. All problems use whole numbers, with no carrying or borrowing.



MATH BLASTER (DAVIDSON & ASSOC.)


SOLVE: -7X -5 =-33
YOUR EQUATION NOW READS
X = 4
AREA
WHAT IS THE CORRECT SOLUTION
YOU MADE 1 COMPUTATIONAL ERROR.
YOU MADE 3 PROCEDURAL ERRORS.
DON'T GET DISCOURAGED. YOU'LL DO BETTER
ON THE NEXT ONE.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY AGAIN (Y/N)?
SUCCESS WITH MATH (CBS)

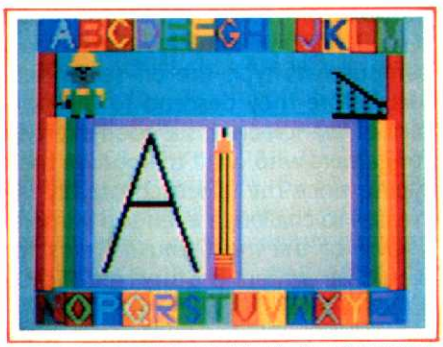


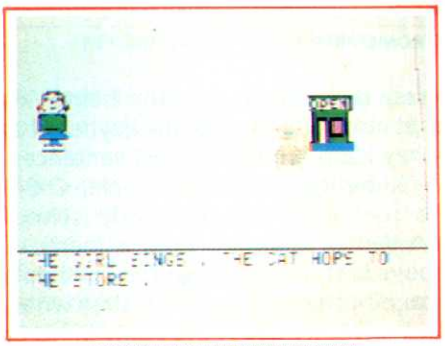
THE PLAYFUL PROFESSOR (SCREENPLAY)

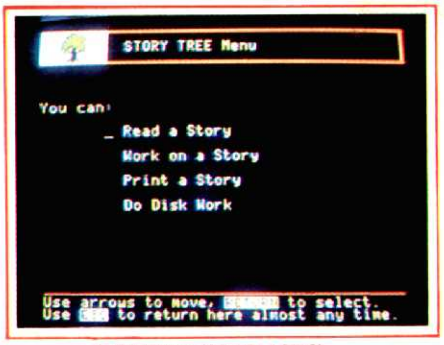
Davidson & Associates markets a program that can improve everyone's arithmetic skills. **Math Blaster!** (Apple, IBM) lets users pick the subject (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals) and the level, starting at first grade and continuing through elementary school. The title game lets arcaders shoot a man out of a cannon at the correct answer to the problem displayed on screen. The solution must be blasted before an on-screen balloon drops to the bottom of the screen. The game has multiple speed levels to keep it interesting through years of learning.

Students hunting for some really serious math instruction need look no further than the CBS Software series **Success With Math** (Apple, Atari, C-64). Eight separate programs for students ages 6 through 18 cover addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, linear equations, quadratic equations, and decimals. Each uses on-screen instructions, identifies errors as they occur, and keeps track of the learner's progress. The programs do not use a game format to teach, but the on-screen encouragement and prompting help make them pleasant to work with.

Educational games are not as much fun as regular entertainment programs and school work will never win any votes as the most popular gaming activity on the home screen. But if Johnny needs help learning the three R's, the sugar-coated instruction found in educational games will make the lessons easier to endure.


ALPHABET CONSTRUCTION SET (PLAYGROUND)


STORY MACHINE (SPINNAKER)



STORYTREE (SCHOLASTIC)

TAC-2™. It stands for Totally Accurate Controller, and it means it. With most joysticks, you can't feel your move until it's too late. With TAC-2 by Suncom, it's like your hand is part of the game. TAC-2 has tactile feedback — feedback you can feel. It also has an extremely tight reaction time, a short throw distance and right and left hand fire buttons to keep you a step ahead of the game.

With TAC-2 you know absolutely, positively the exact moment you make a move — any move.

TAC-2. It's everything you want in a joystick including dependable. It's backed by a 2-year limited warranty–the longest, strongest warranty of any major joystick manufacturer.

The next fast move is up to you. Get TAC-2 for your Atari 2600, Sears Telegame, Atari 400, 600, 800, 1200, 1600, Commodore VIC-20 and 64, TI-99 / 4A (with adaptor), NEC and Panasonic personal computer.* From Suncom, the people who bring you technically-advanced joysticks, including our new Starfighter™ for Apple.*

TAC-2. The controller that makes you part of the game.

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IN CONTROL

Wico's Inty II Is Completely Intellivision-Compatible

ROLLER CONTROLLER

Coleco/ColecoVision- and Adam-compatible

Coleco's line of controllers hasn't exactly established a reputation for durability or dependability. Many Colecovision and Adam owners have been heard to say that their controllers broke down — just about the time they got used to them.

Sorry to be the one to break the news, but home arcaders shouldn't expect to find the Roller Controller any more reliable than a standard Colecovision joystick. It's easy enough on the eyes and hands, but it only works about 95% of the time. That just isn't often enough.

The Roller Controller is an arcade-style trackball embedded in a wide black base. The base houses the controller itself, four action buttons (two for each player), and two storage ports that were supposedly built to hold standard Colecovision/Adam keypads. Gamers are expected to plug each keypad controller into a narrow, hard-to-reach jack in the trackball base, then squeeze the cords — and the keypads — into the storage ports. It's like trying to put a size 10 foot in a size eight shoe.

Connecting the trackball is a major undertaking. It has to be plugged into *both* ports on the Colecovision unit, plus into the power supply, then the controllers have to be hooked up to it and tucked into place, and then the whole shebang still needs an electrical outlet. A real mess at best.

The trackball itself feels like an arcade-quality controller. If only it performed that way! When gamers give the ball an overzealous spin (and don't we all occasionally?) the controller simply ignores the command entirely.

To be fair, the Roller Controller has its good points. It comes packaged with a **Slither** cartridge; it's fully compatible with the VCS adapter; it features a switch to allow play with games originally programmed for joystick control; certain Colecovision games require it to play; and it's the only fully Colecovision/Adam-compatible trackball on the market.

Colecovision owners who really want a trackball will probably be happy enough with this one, once they've adjusted to its foibles. It's just too bad Coleco doesn't seem to feel more responsible for the quality it presents to its captive audience.

(Tracie Forman)

INTELLIVISION JOYSTICK

Wico/Intellivision compatible

Wico is known for producing good arcade and Atari-compatible joysticks. With its second wave of products, the company is trying something new: producing fine replacement controllers for the second- and third-generation dedicated video game machines.

Done up in Wico corporate colors of black and red, this Inty stick looks capable of handling just about anything In fact it does quite a respectable job with just about each type of game available, and excels in certain areas.

THE ROLLER CONTROLLER (COLECO)

Being a little larger than the standard disc controller isn't much of a liability as far as the Inty II is concerned because changeover is just an easy pull out, snap in process; but for the original master component it is somewhat oversized.

That's right gang, it's fully compatible with the wired-in controllers of Intellivision I! The directions show how easy it is to change the wiring so the Wico becomes semi-permanently attached. It can be removed, but I doubt many gamers want to modify their equipment each time they want to play.

For arcaders accustomed to the disc, a period of adjustment is in order. Once through this learning curve, however, this stick offers a good degree of control and can help reduce the cramping associated with long stints of those games requiring use of all four side action buttons. The latter is possible because the controller can be set down on a table top and still used effectively.

The control response was good in all directions, but a knee jerk-like quickness was too much for the stick to effectively handle. Get into a tight spot where speed is of the essence, and even Indiana Jones wouldn't be able to get out of it with this joystick.

INTELLIVISION JOYSTICK (WICO)

The top fire button usually corresponds to the main action, i.e. firing, so it is a welcome blessing. Because fingertip control appears to work best with the stick itself, the thumb is free to fire as fast as a snowball melts on a one-way ride to Old Sol.

One drawback of this action button is the need to press very firmly for a response. In the heat of battle one still has to concentrate on plunging it all the way down — or it's curtains for your on-screen alter ego.

Of course there is a full keypad included. It's an excellent piece of work which works very well. The keys are of the full travel type, not the mylar surface flat or slightly raised types found on the original controllers. Depressing these keys feels good, is easy, and provides a nice positive response quickly.

Room has been made to accomodate the overlays, but a clear plastic sheet (provided) must go over the overlay itself so that it will remain secure. This double layer is a problem. Since the keys travel, they must be adequately depressed. Doing this with both overlays on causes more than one key to register simultaneously. Consequently, nothing happens but an entry error beep. Fortunately the overlays aren't needed for most games after the initial period of play. Where they are still needed, I recommend putting them beside the stick within easy view while play is in progress.

Though I had a little trouble with horizontal movements in **Beamrider** and **Space Armada** (yes, people still play it), the diagonal and quick-change movements needed in **Tron Deadly Discs** and **Football** went very smoothly. As a self-centering unit with multi-directional capability, it is important to hit the horizontal control areas pretty accurately.

All in all, Wico has produced a good, solid product which appears to be built for the long run. It has no major problems and even excels in key-oriented games such as **Treasure of Tarmin.**

(Ted Salamone)

CR-301 COMMANDER 1 JOYSTICK

Comrex/Atari, C-64-compatible

Comrex is known for their high quality line of peripherals, including monitors and printers. With the CR-301 Commander joystick they have provided gamers with a gourmet replacement directly compatible with the Atari VCS, 400/800 and XL computers, Commodore VIC-20, and C-64 models. A Colecovision adapter cable is also available.

Designed for left or right hand use, the CR-301 has two sculptured, full-travel audio feedback action buttons. An option switch on the underside of the unit allows arcaders to set both buttons for the same, or unique, functions.

Small enough to be entirely hand-held, it performs equally well resting on any flat surface. As a matter of fact, it has four small, non-skid pads to stop

CR-301 JOYSTICK (COMREX)

it from getting away when the heat's really on.

The joystick shaft is a thin, short unit designed for fingertip control. Its accurate and sensitive response is enhanced by audio feedback, which notifies gamers that the "snap action" micro-switch contact has been engaged. The throw action is particularly short, allowing for instantaneous 360-degree movement.

Attractively finished in a high-impact beige plastic case with orange fire buttons and a black shaft, the Comrex CR-301 sports a coiled tangle-prevention cord.

Evidently well-constructed for heavy use, this joystick does everything right.

P.S. This reviewer has found no better stick for mastering Screenplay's **Pogo Joe!**

(Ted Salamone)

PROGRAMMABLE PARADE

Campaign '84 Is Looking For A Few Good Candidates

CAMPAIGN '84

(Sunrise Software/ColecoVision)

Colecovisionaries who were overlooked by major political parties in this year's Presidential election can take up the flag of the donkey or the elephant in **Campaign '84,** an innovative action/strategy contest from Sunrise Software. One person can play against the computer or two players compete head-to-head in the all-encompassing quest for the country's electoral votes.

At the start of the game, players select their party's stand on the issues. There are some tough choices here: outlawing argyle socks, pet rock unemployment, banning water pistols and making oysters the national food are just a few of the issues on which players must take a stand. (The issues change with each new game.) Then it's time to hit the campaign trail, moving across the country with a joystick.

While outside a state, running into a collection plate adds hours to the candidate's campaign time, while a collision with a bad press minicam unit loses hours.

To enter a particular state, the candidate moves around its borders while pressing the left action button. Once inside, the Presidential hopeful must work his or her way through cheering crowds, shaking hands with the population to increase their popularity. Colliding with issues that agree with the party platform adds to popularity, while negative confrontations subtract from it.

The object of the game is to win the states with the most electoral votes, since campaign time can be quite limited. When both candidates have run out of time, the election takes place realistically, with returns trickling in according to time zones. After both candidates' wins — and abstaining states — have been tallied, the final results are posted. If a candidate has garnered enough electoral votes for a win, the tune "Hail to the Chief" salutes the new President-elect.

Campaign '84 is one of the most interesting releases this year for the ColecoVision, blending action and strategy smoothly in a game challenging enough for adults, yet easy enough for children. It offers far more than just reflex-testing; it also gives a bit of insight into the strategies behind real Presidential campaigns. Add to that cute music and graphics, a touch of fact and a good sense of humor, and you just can't lose with *Campaign '84.*

(Tracie Forman)

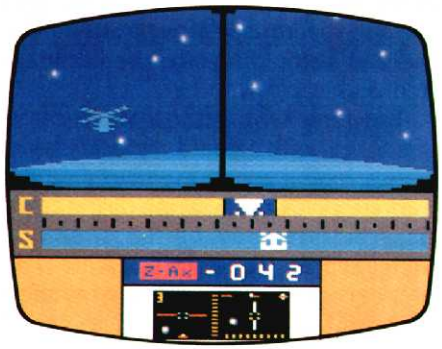
SPACE SHUTTLE — A JOURNEY INTO SPACE

Designed by Steve Kitchen
Activision/Atari 2600

Gamers expecting **Space Shuttle** to be a fast-action, easy-to-use game program, may find themselves in for a bit of a surprise. The action may be fast, but use requires a dedication and intelligence not usually asked for in other programs. This doesn't mean the game isn't fun to play. It is. But *Space Shuttle* is more than a game, perhaps even more than the simulation it claims to be.

Each of the three flight selections requires the arcader to complete a variety of tasks, from a successful launch to the final approach to the landing strip on the desert floor. In between, the armchair astronaut must attain orbit, rendezvous and dock with an erratic satellite, determine the re-entry path and prepare for deorbit burn.

In order for the gamer to accomplish



SPACE SHUTTLE (ACTIVISION)

this, all of the toggles, switches and input devices on the Atari 2600 system were reprogrammed to function as part of the shuttle's console. (This means that the program will not work on Atari 2600 adapters.) For example, the b & w/color switch becomes the primary engine switch, and the right difficulty switch alternates between opening and closing cargo bay doors and raising and lowering landing gear. Perhaps the most important toggle on the shuttle's console is the status switch (game select switch). By continuously flipping through this switch, the shuttle pilot can check his speed, altitude, mission status and fuel level. Even the joystick has multiple functions.

Flight #1 is an autosimulator; because the shuttle essentially flies itself, novice gamers can use this mode to see what the mission involves, and to get some practice landing and adjusting the Y-axis. The second flight, also a simulator, allows gamers to make all but the most drastic errors (crashing into the desert floor, flying off into outer space without activating primary engines, etc.) without aborting the mission.

When gamers feel comfortable with the program, they can try out Flight #3. In this mode, anything and everything affects the mission. It's a rare rocketjockey who'll finish a mission the first five times out. Eventually though, gamers will be able to orbit, rendezvous and even land with little or no trouble. The challenge then becomes finishing a mission with the minimum amount of fuel consumption and elapsed time.

Because the simulation may be difficult for the novice, documentation is unusually precise. Read it carefully!

If *Space Shuttle* sounds like something not usually seen on the VCS, that's because it's one of a kind. Such programs are rarely ever seen, even on computer systems. *Space Shuttle* is a work of programming art, and Steve Kitchen is probably one of the most gifted designer/programmers in the field. Even on a 64K computer, this program would be a masterpiece.

(Vincent Puglia)

METEORITES

Electra Concepts/Atari 5200/cartridge

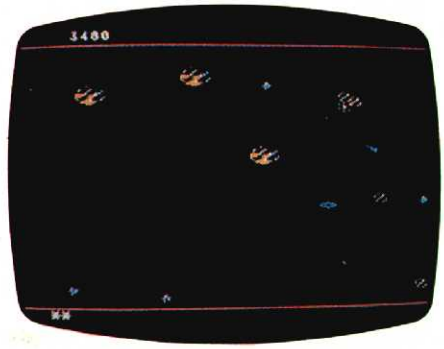
Many of today's videogame players were weaned on the classic arcade titles **Asteroids** and **Asteroids Deluxe.** Except for the uninspired VCS translation by Atari, home gamers had nothing to relieve symptoms of *Asteroids* withdrawal.

That is, until now. Electra Concepts, manufacturer of high quality joysticks (Triga Command and the 5200 analog-to-digital Masterplay interface), has made a first class version available for the SuperSystem. Dedicated planetoid-crushers will find **Meteorites** very faithful to the coin-op in spirit as well as play-action since the object is still to score as many points as possible by destroying asteroids and alien vessels while avoiding all contact.

Of course the vector graphics are missing, but the raster scan images replacing them are intriguing. Through subtle manipulation of color, light, and shadow, the largest chunks of floating space debris have a luminescent quality.

In spite of the bow and stern navigation lights, the player's triangular shaped vessel can be difficult to spot when the screen is full of similarly sized and colored mini-meteors. (Up to 78 individually mobile, flicker-free objects can be displayed at once).

Weaponry in this two player contest consists of a nose-mounted photon cannon and a hyperspace warp. Activation of the latter instantly teleports the ship elsewhere, rendering it invisible for a period of time. Frequent use increases the risk of a reentry explosion due to overheated engines. Talk about being caught on the horns



METEORITES (ELECTRA CONCEPTS)

of a dilemma!

The longer it takes for an arcader to clear a screen, the faster the action and the accompanying music become. Screen wrap capabilities and occasional appearances by persistent missile-spouting saucers combine to make *Meteorites* a challenging, action-packed cart.

The playfield simulates deep space so gravity has little effect on movement. A little thrust goes a long, long way!

All in all, *Meteorites* is a tough, 24-level game with enough in every department to satisfy even the most die-hard pulverizer, atomizer or smasher of outer space gravel.

(Ted Salamone)

KRULL

Atari/2600

For those gamers who have long ago abandoned the idea of coin-op translations for the 2600 having any merit whatsoever, Atari's excellent adaptation of **Krull** should help dispel that cynical outlook.

Marvelous, totally unexpected graphic nuances combine with realistic audio to create a challenging multi-scenario action adventure. The contest begins with the marriage of Krull (a quaint verse of "The Wedding March" plays somewhat incongruously in light of the array of gargoyles and behemoths that comprise this program's cast of characters). No sooner does the Barbarian protagonist wed than an army of tree-like ghouls charges onto the screen from the castle at the top. Brandishing deadly spears, Krull must defend his bride with his sword, but the odds eventually prove overwhelming and a ghoulie grabs the fair maid and makes off with her.

The game switches to a desert chase sequence with beautifully articulated horses loping across the tawny sands. Periodically, Krull will ride past a martial arts-style throwing star, the *shuriken* favored by Ninja assassins. The arcader must grab these whenever possible for later use.

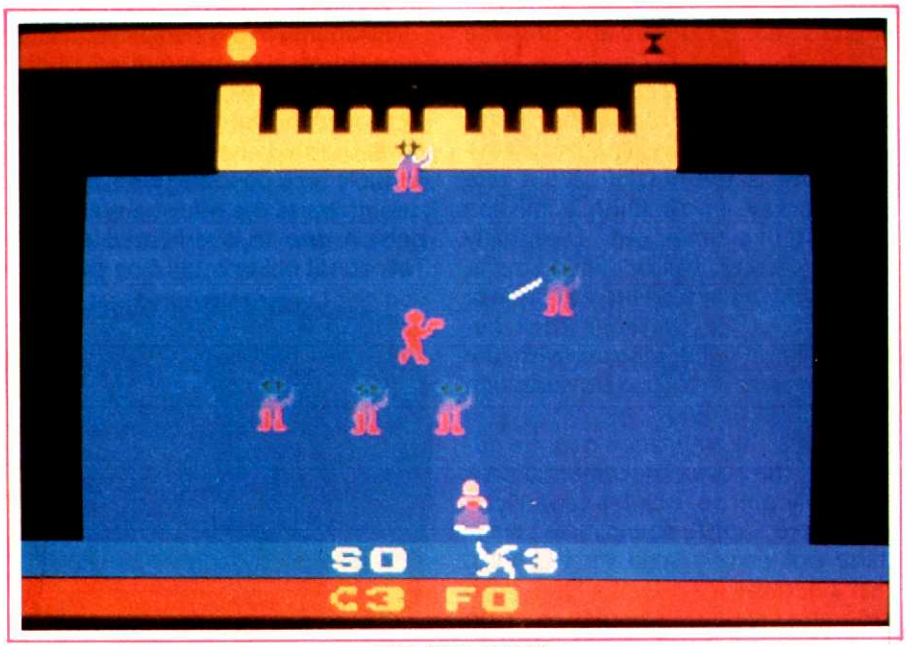
Midway through the chase, Krull reaches the spider's den, wherein hides the invisible key to the castle in which his lady is captive. Eluding a spider and moving slowly over the treacherous webbing, Krull must reach the window at the top of the playfield. When he does, the key is revealed for an instant and the warrior must then reach and seize it before the time limit elapses.

Key in hand, the desert pursuit on horseback continues, with *shuriken* again turning up along the road. Suddenly, the horses stop and, with the help of the magic key, the evil castle is compelled to materialize.

Within, Krull must wage his final battle. His bride is held prisoner behind a brick wall, components of which can only be shattered by the boomerang-like throwing stars. One problem: a rock-throwing giant is guarding the prison, and this gigantic warder just eats up those metal stars — even on the rebound. So Krull must shatter the prison, brick-by-brick, while dodging rocks and keeping his missiles from the behemoth's hands.

Krull is a delightful surprise, a 2600 game with play-value and graphic charm coming out its silicon ears. Highly recommended!

(Bill Kunkel)



2600 KRULL (ATARI)

MOONSWEEPER

Imagic/ColecoVision/Cartridge

In **Moonsweeper** one player pilots a vessel across selected moons of Quadrant Jupiter and rescues five stranded miners while avoiding towers, lunar satellites, orbital launchers, and surface destroyers. Once that's done, the craft must thread a series of accelerator rings to achieve orbital velocity.

Besides defensive measures, the U.S.S. Moonsweeper can fire back at the obstructions and deadly missiles. Unfortunately, the firepower is not selective — a miner might get fried to a crisp in a wild free-for-all.

To start a round, the gamer positions a cursor over one of four increasingly difficult galactic starfields. In initial orbit the craft must move horizontally across the bottom of the screen avoiding space debris while attempting to "land" on one of four variously colored moons which pass by in parabolic arc.

The pilot summons a force field by pulling back on the joystick, but this should only be used in emergencies as it is a severe drain on the fuel supply.

While skimming the surface, a full-blown instrument panel indicates velocity, degree of bank (left or right), score, number of reserve ships and miners rescued, fuel remaining, and a truly useful radar screen.

The joystick controls movement as well as speed in this scene, so a heavy hand can create some awesome velocities and equally mind-numbing visuals. Of course, life expectancy at such unbridled velocities is almost nil.

Control is quick and accurate, but lack of any audio effects beyond the customary explosions and short blips and bleeps is a problem.

Despite pedestrian sound effects, *Moonsweeper* is a solid effort.

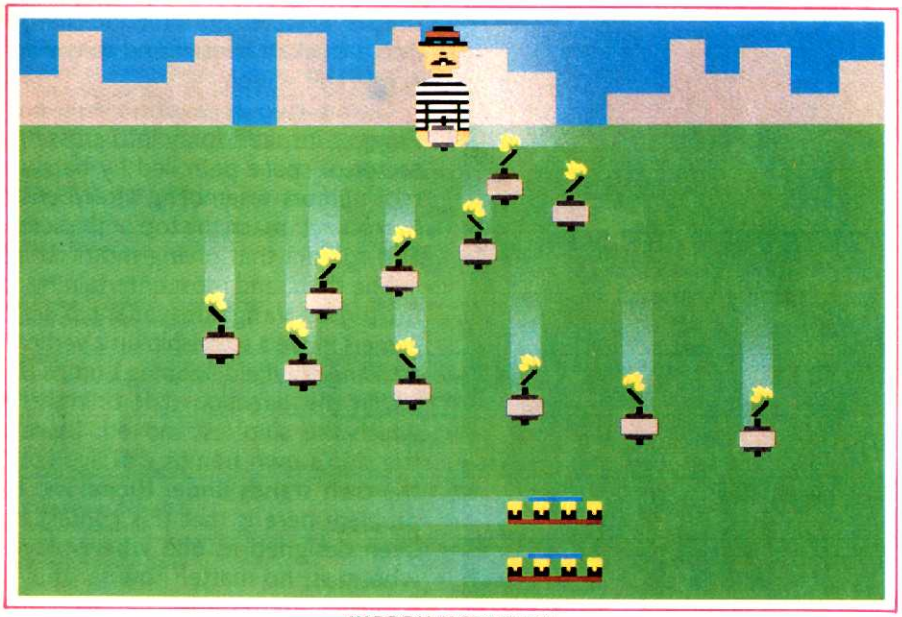
(Ted Salamone)

KABOOM

Activision/Atari 5200

Activision's **Kaboom** cartridge for the 5200 Supersystem has the arcader maneuvering three horizontally stacked, water-filled buckets across the screen, in a desperate attempt to catch and defuse the lit bombs, tossed from above by the Mad Bomber.

Players must first select large or



KABOOM (ACTIVISION)

small buckets, then match the bomb chucking antics of the crazed villain through judicious use of the joystick. Caught bombs splash realistically into the water (fortunately, the Pails never run dry), to the score of the "1812 Overture".

Missing a bomb ignites all on-screen-bombs like so many firecrackers, and results in the loss of a bucket.

At the slower speeds, gamers can easily line up underneath each falling projectile, but eventually, the TNT falls like raindrops in a thunderstorm; so success is dependent upon recognizing patterns. Learn well, because a thousand points are needed to earn a replacement bucket.

A two-player pitch and catch variation allows one gamer to wear prison stripes while the other controls the bucket brigade. As with the solitaire version, the brigader controls when the bombs will fall by depressing either of the lower red controller buttons.

A vanity board allowing inclusion of three initials and the three highest scores is a welcome feature, but it's not available in the head to head contest.

Despite these additions (which don't greatly affect the play-mechanic this translation of the 2600 classic hasn't gained much in the move to the more powerful 5200. Because of this, it is a disappointing cartridge, best suited for those few who are coming to the game for the first time.

(Ted Salamone)

GALAXIAN

(Atarisoft/Colecovision)

The classic Midway quarter-eater has found its way to the Colecovision, and it's everything **Galaxian** fans could want in a home version of the space-age shoot-out.

As in the coin-op game, players control a horizontally-moving blaster stationed at the bottom of the screen. Rows of brightly-colored aliens swarm overhead, periodically breaking away from the pack to swoop down, raining bombs towards the cannon. Yellow leaders always travel with red escorts (when the escorts are left), and shooting the escorts and leader (in that order) results in higher scores.

The game looks and plays just like the arcade *Galaxian*, though the alien's high-pitched attack squeals have been modified to suit the Colecovision's sound capabilities. This minor change has no bearing on the game's play-action or its overall enjoyability.

Credit Atarisoft with yet another outstanding translation for Colecovisionaries. *Galaxian* is solid gold.

(Tracie Forman)

SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

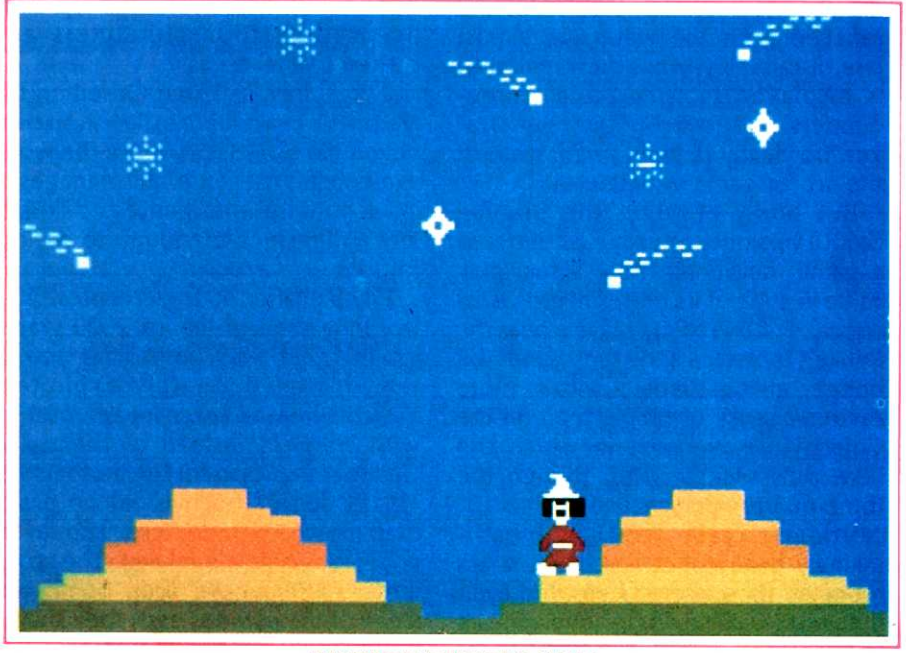
Atari/2600

Mickey Mouse meets **Missile Command!**

In this fairly straightforward, if sometimes tedious, kideogame, gamers move Mickey—cast in his starring turn from Walt Disney's "Fantasia" as the wizard who turns a simple clean-up into the Johnstown flood — across a multitiered platform, zapping a variety of whimsical and graphically abstract (you'll never guess what they're *really* supposed to be) targets dropping from the sky. There are periodically-appearing secondary scenes in which Mickey must scramble around after a gaggle of hopping broomsticks and frugging stools in an appropriate homage to the film.

This is a noble effort with absolutely remarkable, if not overly elaborate, grahics. Mickey is clearly Mickey, complete with wizard's cap and robes, and the dancing broomsticks are delightful. The play-mechanic *does* get tiresome, but there are a quartet of difficulty levels and play variants to occupy young arcaders.

(Bill Kunkel)



SORCERER'S APPRENTICE (ATARI)

VCS DRAGONFIRE (IMAGIC)

DRAGONFIRE

(Imagic/Colecovision)

Imagic's two-screen action quest made its debut for the Atari 2600 over a year ago and was an excellent, if somewhat under-appreciated fantasy game in which players — in the role of a young Prince — fought their way over the drawbridge of their captured castle. Once inside, the Prince had to dash back and forth across the room, reclaiming stolen treasures guarded by a fire-breathing dragon.

The Colecovision cartridge has the same basic story line, though it's been dressed up with the most splendid visuals ever seen on the system. In the drawbridge sequence, the ripples and reflections on the water are almost laserdisc-quality, while the inner castle is displayed in spectacular three-quarters perspective. This new **Dragonfire** clearly defines a new state of the art for game visuals.

But oddly enough, the original (2600) version is actually a bit better as a game, delivering more actual play value in spite of its more limited visual appeal. For one thing, players hear the Prince's footsteps as he runs across the bridge, giving them a better, more rhythmic sense of timing than on the Colecovision version, in which the hero runs silently. And, though the three-quarter perspective in the CV cartridge's castle screen is breath-takingly beautiful at first, there's less room left for scattered treasures. Even the sword-wielding ogre, who appears in later levels, can't make up in terms of challenge for the limited running-space in the treasure rooms.

This translation of *Dragonfire* can't be matched in visual splendor, but it's unfortunate that in the translation from Atari 2600 to Colecovision, a good deal of excitement was sacrificed along the way.

(Tracie Forman)

PIGS IN SPACE

Atari/Atari 2600

Children's videogames have certainly acquired a checkered reputation among young and old arcaders alike. Too often, it seems, conventional programs that don't make it are simply dubbed "kideo," dressed up with licensed cartoon characters and rushed to the stores.

Atari's **Pigs in Space** (based on the Muppet's continuing satire on science fiction films), while far from the worst example of this genre, still manages to insult both the intelligence and skills of any youngster old enough to wield a joystick.

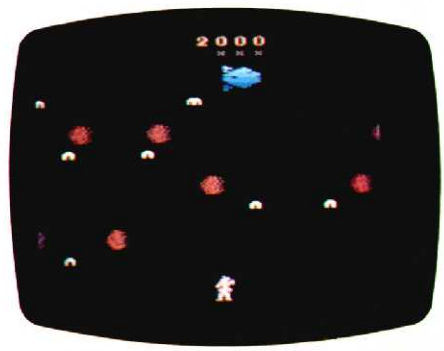
Pigs consists of three contests, all featuring state-of-the-art 2600 graphics, and brim with possibilities, few of which are adequately exploited.

Game one is a **Space Invaders** satire, with chickens instead of aliens and Gonzo standing in for the mothership. This is quite attractive but no easier than most SI-type contests, and several obvious bets are missed. The space birds, for example, drop bombs instead of the obvious eggs they should be hurling. Still, this should entertain very young players, especially when the player surrogate is hit and changes into a chicken himself and runs wildly across the screen.

Game two is a none-too-easy **Frogger**-inspired foray into crossing a sector of space patrolled by bats and red meteors resembling strawberries. The object: reach the top of the screen and contact that roving mothership.

The third, and most entertaining, of the trio is a **Vanguard**-variant in which gamers move a spaceship up a vertically scrolling playfield, lobbing bombs that arc in the direction (left or right) in which the ship last moved. Beware: the ship's own bombs can ace you if the craft stands under them. The big problem here is that this contest has been designed as one where players who miss, no matter how far they're travelled, are returned to "go". Anyone who knows kids (or, hey, adults such as yours truly, for that matter) can imagine the frustration level such games engender in arcaders.

But my major problem with *Pigs in Space* is this: it starts off at much too difficult a level, then offers no advanced levels once a player has mastered it! Reach the top of the screen in the last two contests and the game ends. Someone at Atari has a very strange concept of learning curves. Beyond that, a basic impulse of all gamers is the need to master a scenario at a simple level, then move on to more challenging variations. *Pigs* sets a single



PIGS IN SPACE (ATARI)

standard—a ridiculously high one for neophytes, at that — and then leaves the player stranded.

In its defense, *Pigs in Space* shines in the audio/visual areas, it *does* offer three different contests, and the Muppet characters will doubtless appeal to their young fans. It's just difficult to imagine why more thought was not put into this package.

Pigs is a noble, if significantly flawed, entry into the kideogame sweeps.

(Bill Kunkel)

Looking for Electronic Games?

If you have trouble finding ELECTRONIC GAMES at your local newsstand or want to know where to send a friend to pick up a copy, the following will help. It's a list of retail stores across the country that carry ELECTRONIC GAMES every month.

ALABAMA
Video Box Office, Birmingham

ALASKA
Byte Store, Juneau

ARIZONA
CG Appliance TV & Video, Casa Grande
Hollywood Connection, Phoenix

ARKANSAS
National Video #04001, North Little Rock
Pine Bluff Video, Pine Bluff

CALIFORNIA
Video Station, Alameda
Video Cross Roads, Anaheim
C & W Video, Carmarillo
Video Connection, Citrus Hts.
Video Station, El Monte
The Works, Eureka
Coast Video, Fountain Valley
Video Station, Fremont
Video To Go, Gardena
Hip Pocket Book Store, Garden Grove
Happy Home Merchandiser, Granada Hills
Picture Show, Huntington Beach
Video Station, Laguna Hills
Back Stage Video, Long Beach
KK Sight & Sound, Los Angeles
Pirates Cove, Monterey Park
20th Century Video, Newark
Video Plus, Novato
Electronic Games, Orange
Sound Machine, Orange
Software Central, Pasadena
In Home Video, Riverside
Video Station, Rowland Hts.
Video Games N Gadgets, Sacramento
Videoland, San Francisco
Games Gags Gifts, Tahoe City
Video Etc., West Covina

COLORADO
Sweet's Tapes & Records, Aruada
American Home Theater, Colorado Springs
Guys N Dolls Video, Denver
Program Store #7806, Littleton

CONNECTICUT
Video Connection, Bridgeport
Video Studio II, East Winsor
Video Connection, Fairfield
Nostalgia World, North Haven

DELAWARE
Video Station, Wilmington

FLORIDA
Electronics Depot Inc., Alamonte Springs
Peace Chief Sound Center, Bradenton
Fort Myers Video Movie Center, Fort Myers
Computer Image Software Centre, Miami
The Crossings Video Shop Inc., Miami
Jeff Vid Inc./DBA Video Club Center, Miami
Orange Blossom Hobbies, Miami
PSL Electronics Inc., Miami
Video Trends, Winter Haven

GEORGIA
All Star Electronics, Atlanta
Video Connection, Marietta

HAWAII
Data I Microcomputers, Honolulu

IDAHO
Mountain Video, Black Foot

ILLINOIS
BAC Video Saw Mart, Belleville
Devon Hobbymodels Inc., Chicago
TV Repair, Chicago
Video Tape Gallery, Chicago
Videocourt, Cicero
Glenwood Distributors, Collinsville
Software N Stuff, Collinsville
Countryside Home Video, Countryside
Electronic Playground, Decatur
Video Dimensions, Des Plaines
Video Show, Des Plaines
Video Comp. Inc., Evanston
Circle Communications, Forest Park
Video Basics Inc., Joliet
Kenilworth Video, Kenilworth
Video Rangers Inc., Morton Grove
RJ Hobby & Electronic Center, Murphysboro
Classic Video, Oak Lawn
Sound Warehouse, Oak Lawn
New World Games, Rockford
Video To You Inc., Shaumburg
Toytown, Springfield
Video Hotline, Winnetka
Pace Micro Software, Wooddale

INDIANA
World of Video, Indianapolis
Video World, Kokomo
Video Place, Merrillville
Video Exchange, Mishawaka

IOWA
Video Island Ltd., Davenport

KANSAS
Hollywood At Home, Overland Park

KENTUCKY
Videovisions, Louisville

LOUISIANA
Ann's Video Junction, Slidell

MAINE
Sound Track, Sanford

MARYLAND
Video Connection, Beltsville
Video Connection, Bowie
Clinton Video Ctr., Clinton
Video Connection, Cockeysville
Video Works, Ellicott City
Video Connection, Olney
Reistertown Video Inc., Reistertown
Video Outlet, Silver Springs
Computer Connection, Taneytown
Greetings & Readings, Towson
Computer Answers & SVC, Waldolf

MASSACHUSETTS
Acton Video, Acton
Game-Tech, Arlington
Name Of The Game, Boston
Video Connection, Burlington
Act 1 Video Inc., Dracut
Video Plus, Framingham
Video Exchange, North Andover
Taylor Sound Inc., Pittsfield
Video Paradise, Plymouth
Freeze Frame Inc., Saugus
Video Barn, Somerville
TV Game Traders, Springfield
Good Vibrations, Stoughton

MICHIGAN
Edge Connector, Clio
Motor City Drugs & Video, Dearborn
Alexander's Book Store, Detroit
Mousetrap Video, Detroit
Just Software, East Detroit
Video Connection, Farmington Hills
Video Today, Holland
Home Video Outlet, Lansing
Video Phile, Lapeer
Video Connection #140, Madison Hts.
Signal Service, Napoleon
Pro Video, Okemos
Chi Town Records, Oscoda
New Horizon Book Shop, Roseville
Mettron, Saint Clair Shores
Record Cellar, Sterling Hts.
Maxaron Corp., Warren
Rite Way Ents., Warren
Top Stop T Shirt Co., Warren

MINNESOTA
Adventures In Video, Crystal
Games By James, Edina
Discount Video, Minneapolis
Games By James, Minnetonka

MISSISSIPPI
Take-One Video, Long Beach

MISSOURI
National Video, Kansas City
Curt's Computers, Palmyra
Harvest Plaza Video, St. Charles
Liberty Sound, St. Joseph

MONTANA
Curtis Mathes Entertainment, Billings

NEVADA
IC Electronics, Las Vegas

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Video Biz of New Hampshire, Bedford
Home Video Shop, Seabrook
Video Station Inc., South Merrimack

NEW JERSEY
Software City, Bergenfield
Video Aids Inc., Bloomfield
Video Vision, Bridgeton
Trash Or Treasure, Budd Lake
Gemini Enterprises, Cedar Knolls
Video Connection, Cherry Hill
O'Johnnies, Clark
Accent On Video, Closter
Video Store, Elmwood Park
Video Trek, Fort Lee
Camera Video Showplace, Freehold
Nu-Video, Lakewood
Video Junction Inc., Leonia
Video Home Center, Maralapan
Video Track, Marlboro
DC Video Inc., Manasquan
Ippy's, Manasquan
Video Studio, Metuchen
Video Access, North Bergen
Video Fantasy, Palisades Park
Stan's Discount Energy & Video, Penns Grove
Record Record, Pompton Lakes
Software City, Ridgefield
Video Connection, Somerset
Video Station, Somerset
Software Store Inc., Somerville
Video Galaxy, Turnerville
Captain Video Inc., Vineland
Opening Night Video, Wayne
Video Odyssey Inc., Woodbridge
Video Valance, Woodridge

NEW YORK
Video Connection, Albany
Videovision, Baldwin
Future Video, Bayside
Video Visions, Bayside
Videotronics, Bronx
Discount Book Warehouse, Brooklyn
Ekron Systems, Brooklyn
Flatbush Video, Brooklyn
Parkway Video & Electronics, Brooklyn
Taso's Video Fair, Brooklyn
Video Store, Brooklyn
Video Connection, Cedarhurst
Moriches Vantage Mart, Center Moriches
Video Emporium, Coram
Anytime Video, Deer Park
Video Connection, Delmar
Video Connection, Derby
Video Connection, East Northport
Video Quest, Elmont
Tanel Electronics, Floral Park
Video Network, Floral Park
Audio Video Barn, Blushing
Video Network Center, Flushing
Video Wizard Inc., Flushing
Magic Video, Forest Hills
Video Statio, Forest Hills
NSB Video, Franklin Square
Big Apple Video, Glendale
Video Etc., Great Neck
Huntington Video & Computer, Huntington Sta
Video Enterprise, Kenmore
ACE Camera Shop, Lawrence
Castle Video Inc., Lindenhurst
Kaleidoscope, Liverpool
Delman Television Co., Long Beach
L V R Video, Manhasset
Ankar Video Inc., Merrick
Video Connection, Merrick
Video Connection, Middle Village
HM Electronics, Nanuet
Captain Video, New City
Future Video, New Hyde Park
Leigh's Computers, New York
Mau Corp. New York
Video Connection, New York
Software Supply Int'l. Inc., Niagara Falls
Ozone Park Video, Ozone Park
Commander Video, Port Chester
Video Adventure, Pound Ridge
Video Breakthrough, Riverhead
Video Den, Scarsdale
Video Entertainment, Sidney
J N P Electronics, Staten Island
Video Galactica, Staten Island
Video Station, Suffern
Video Connection, Sunnyside
Video Connection, Tonawanda
Seigen Enterprises, Valley Stream
Fireside Video, White Plains
Video Village, Whitestone
Silver Dollar Coin Co., Woodhaven
Video Supermarket, Woodhaven
Big Apple Music, Yorkville

NORTH CAROLINA
Video Station, Asheville
21st Century Video, Durham
Video Connection, Goldsboro
Video Connection, Greensboro
Rainbow Records, Morehead City
Hardins Magnavox Home Ent., Shelby

OHIO
M & B Video Store, Akron
Video Replay, Akron
Future Now, Cincinnati
Video Depot, Cleveland
Magic Castle Video, Columbus
Video Game Express, Columbus
Video Plus Inc., Garfield Hts.
Home Video Library, Middletown
American Video, North Olmsted
Cartridge Connection, Proctorville
Calypso Video, Toledo
Silver Screen Video, Wickliffe
Video Den, Willoughby

OKLAHOMA
Video Comp. Inc., Lawton

OREGON
Capital Audio Systems, Salem

PENNSYLVANIA
Captain Video Center Store #10, Aston
Video Connection, Dresher
Video Store, Levittown
Home Video Center Inc., Newton Square
Tonidale Arcade, Oakdale
Software Plus, Philadelphia
Video Games Plus, Philadelphia
The Video Inn, Philadelphia
Video Connection, Quakertown
International Video York, York

PUERTO RICO
Video Vision #59, Guaynabo

RHODE ISLAND
Video Connection, Johnston
Video City, Providence

SOUTH CAROLINA
Carolina Video Center Inc., Charleston
Game Exchange, Greenwood
All That's Video, Spartanburg

TENNESSEE
Radio Service Center, Nashville
Video World, Nashville
Totally Video, Smyrna
Sneaky Snakes Elect., Somerville

TEXAS
TV Center, Abilene
Pantego TV, Arlington
Vid-Com, Brownsville
Video Rainbow, Forth Worth
Wedgewood Rental, Fort Worth
Audio Video Plus, Houston
VI-AM Video & Bookstore, Houston
TV Games Limited, Midland
M & M Elect. Sales & SVC, Synder
Lonestar Video Rentals, Vidor

VERMONT
Video Connection, Brattleboro

VIRGINIA
Video Station, Alexandria
Mr. Franco Printing & Newsstand, Arlington
Video Shop Inc., Manassa
Video Station, Roanoke
Video Express, Virginia Beach
Combs Distributing, Winchester

WASHINGTON
Video Space, Bellevue
Kent Video & Computers, Kent
Platnium Sound, Seattle
Video Int'l. Corp./DBA Video Hut, Seattle

WEST VIRGINIA
Computers Plus Inc., Charleston
Tronix, Charleston

WISCONSIN
Video Exchange, Glendale
Phantasy Age Inc., Lacrosse
Total Eclipse, Mehomonee Falls
Ford Theatre Home Video, Racine
Galaxy TV Games, Racine
Drakes Super Valu, Salem
Video Place, South Milwaukee

WYOMING
Clark Co., Cheyenne

CANADA
Video Games Galore, Courtney, British Columbia
Home & Business Computer Ctr., Mississauga, Ontario
Future Shop, Vancourver, British Columbia
Riverside Products, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory
Red River Book Shop, Winnipeg, Manitoba

INSIDE GAMING

By TRACIE FORMAN

Guy Nouri: Animation For Everyone

Guy Nouri (in blue jacket) and Eric Podietz: The core of IPS

When computer gaming was young, most designers were computer hobbyists, more commonly known as hackers. But as the electronic gaming industry starts coming of age, a new breed of software developers is emerging, attracted by the computer's enormous potential for translating unusual concepts into on-screen reality.

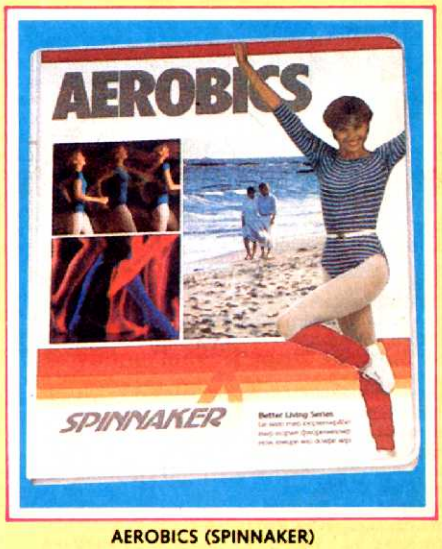
Interactive Pictures Systems is quickly gaining a reputation for innovative software, such as Reston's **Movie Maker.** While this program isn't a game *per se,* its potential entertainment value goes far beyond the typical problem-solving or hand-eye coordination involved in most games. With *Movie Maker,* the user becomes an artist, scriptwriter, animator, and director of short computer movies, limited only by his/her imagination.

Guy Nouri, creator of *Movie Maker* and president of Interactive Pictures Systems, didn't foresee a computer in his future when he was a young artist in New York. Even as a high-school student he ignored sports and other extracurricular activities to concentrate on painting, his great love since the age of thirteen.

"As soon as I played with making images," he says, "I knew that was what I'd be doing with the rest of my life."

Nouri's parents discouraged his interest in art at first because they were distressed at the idea of his going to art school instead of college. (Both Guy and his brother Michael had penchants for the creative arts. Moviegoers will remember Michael Nouri as the handsome Prince Charming-type in "Flashdance".)

Eventually Guy's art studies took him to Princeton, where he had his first course in computer graphics. "I was totally blown away," he recalls. "The potential (of the computer as an art medium) was enormous. Suddenly you could control time and space. When you deal with a painted picture,



AEROBICS (SPINNAKER)

what's on the front (of the canvas) is on the front. When you deal with a computer, suddenly the time and space open up. You can manipulate them in a far more open context. You can create your own laws."

His interest in computer graphics culminated in his founding a magazine called "Computer Pictures." As he started visiting graphics workshops, lecturing, and learning about the computer field, his focus shifted from painting to electronics. But within a few months, United Business Publications, which owned the magazine, fired him.

Six months, later the same company brought Nouri back in to install its new computer equipment. It was there he met his future partner, Eric Podietz.

Podietz had designed **Painter Power,** a simple drawing program. Guy was impressed, and spent the next few months trying to "reel" in Eric. Their first joint effort was **Paint,** originally produced for the children's museum in Washington, D.C.

Paint was such a critical success that Guy decided to form a software company of his own, and in June, 1982, IPS was born. The fledgeling company spent 18 months designing its next major effort, *Movie Maker,* for Reston. Professional versions of the program are licensed to a number of game manufacturers for use in graphics generation. CBS, Spinnaker, Reston, and WCI Labs (which programs for Atari) all use Movie Maker in its professional form.

But *Movie Maker* was just the beginning for Nouri's new venture. Spinnaker is already marketing IPS' strategy game **Trains,** as well as an excercise program called **Aerobics,** complete with music and leotard-clad excercise instructor.

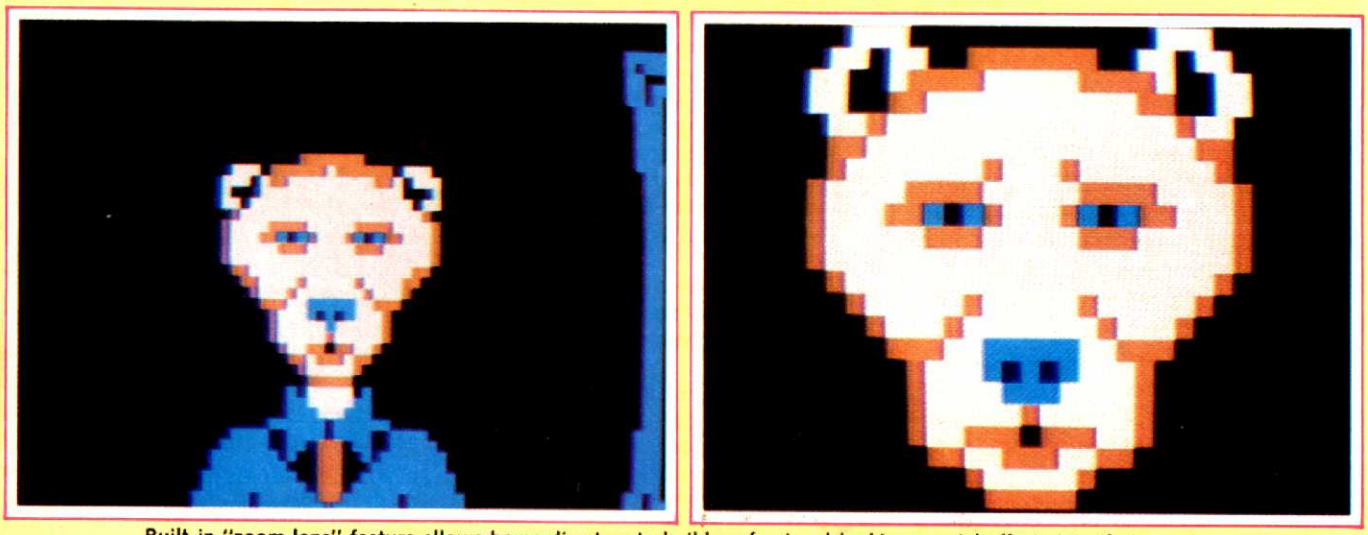
The design staff of Interactive Pictures Systems: innovators in computer entertainment

Some upcoming IPS projects include **Dance,** a choreography program that lets closet klutzes control the actions of one to five dancers; **Gramma's House,** a colorforms-type game that lets young kids travel to various places, bringing items back to Gramma's; four other early-learning programs; and a three-part program that Nouri promises will be "a whole new way of gaming". The trilogy's subject will be robots.

A demonstration of IPS' *Movie Maker*

But IPS isn't just Guy Nouri and Eric Podietz. Approximately 15 programmers, artists, animators, and musicians have been brought together under the company banner. Guy points out that money isn't the most important thing to IPS' design staff. "If they wanted lots of money, they wouldn't be here," he says, stressing that dedication to quality products is the unifying factor at IPS.

"We want to be the best," Nouri declares. "If you create a great product but it isn't something the person with the computer can enjoy, then you're not doing your job. We want our products to be consistent sellers, not fads." G



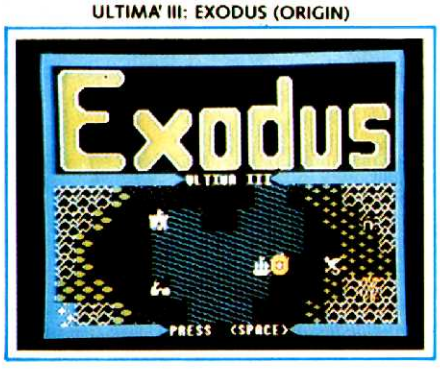
Built-in "zoom lens" feature allows home directors to build professional-looking special effects into their movies.

GAME OF THE MONTH

Introducing EG's First Game of the Month

By TRACIE FORMAN

ULTIMA III: EXODUS (ORIGIN)



ULTIMA III: EXODUS

Designed by Lord British
Origin Systems/Apple,
Atari, C-64 and IBM-PC/48K Disk

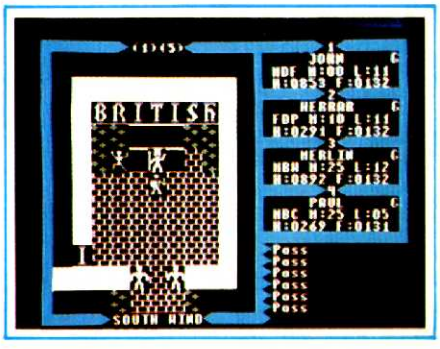
The third release in Lord British's immensely successful **Ultima** series, **Ultima III: Exodus** is even better than its outstanding predecessors. This action/strategy adventure classic lets the computer gamer bring an entire party of adventurers (up to four characters) on the quest to find and defeat the evil Exodus, rumored to be the offspring of the wizard and sorceress villains from **Ultima** and **Ultima II** respectively.

It should be pointed out that *Ultima III* is a four-*character* game, not a four-player game, since the need to input quickly with the keyboard makes this too bulky for more than one gamer.

As in previous *Ultima* adventures, play begins by creating a character. Race, class, and gender are all chosen by the computerist, who then allots ability points among various attributes like strength, dexterity, and intelligence. Up to 20 characters can be stored on disk, providing a pool of people from which the party is created.

The realm of Sosaria is huge, though *Ultima III* is smaller and more focused in scope than *Ultima II*. The time doors from the latter have been replaced by the mysterious Moon Gates, which can teleport characters instantly — or even provide access to areas otherwise unreachable. The Moon Gates are hard to find and even harder to figure out, but master them you must if your party is to be successful.

Sosaria consists of one large continent, plus a few smaller islands to explore. The terrain is dotted with towns and underground ruins that must be *thoroughly* checked out. Movement and all input is accomplished by pressing various keys, each



of which has a unique function that requires some memorization. The time spent learning the control scheme is nothing, though, compared to the pleasure adventurers have in working through the quest.

Both land and sea must be traveled to unravel all Sosaria's mysteries. Certain Marks (hot brands) can only be found in the dungeon depths, while much valuable information can be had if towns are painstakingly explored. (Towns are also the place to buy key items, such as food, armor and weapons.)

All characters in Sosaria are of good alignment, so *true* role-playing isn't really possible. But players are welcome to try such underhanded tactics as stealing treasures from the stores, or assaulting town guards.

The game is attractively packaged with a colorful cloth map of the realm, two spell tomes (one for wizards and another for clerics), a quick-reference guide to commands and copy routines, and an illustrated rule booklet. (Though the written material in

ABOUT OUR NEW FEATURE

This issue debuts Electronic Games Magazine's Game of the Month, a regular feature which puts the spotlight on a game judged by the editors to be outstanding in many ways.

Some of the criteria used in selecting a Game of the Month are:

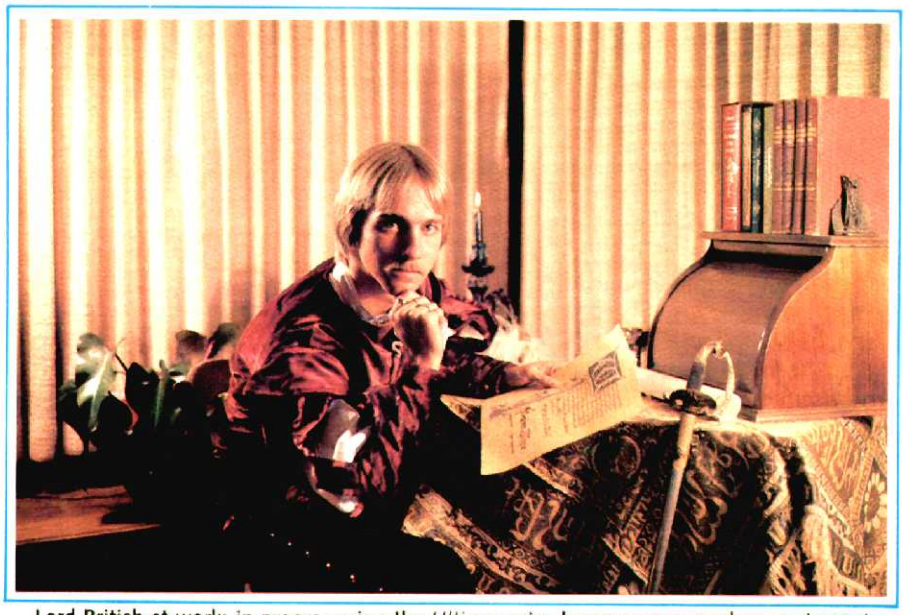
- **outstanding play-action**
- **availability to a large proportion of electrogamers**
- **innovative, unusual and/or outstanding play-mechanics**
- **excellent play-value for the time invested.**

The editors welcome reader comments and suggestions for future Games of the Month. Send all correspondence to the address listed in the Readers Replay section.

earlier editions contained some confusing instructions, Origin Systems has taken steps to clarify the wording.) Overall, it's an exceptionally pretty package.

The graphics are pretty good for a game of this complexity, though there's little in the way of real on-screen animation. Still, the towns, oceans and terrain are nicely rendered and add to the medieval flavor of the work, though the dungeon graphics are almost nonexistent. Sound effects work nicely with the pictures, with different theme music for towns, open country, dungeons, and transactions with the benevolent monarch of Sosaria, Lord British himself.

But "the play's the thing", and *Ultima III: Exodus* proves to be an adventure gamer's dream come true. The world is richly detailed, allowing people to lose themselves in the fantasy, with enough brain-teasers to lose a week's sleep over. Very few adventure games offer so much play-value for the time and money invested.



Lord British at work: in programming the *Ultima* series he uses more modern equipment.

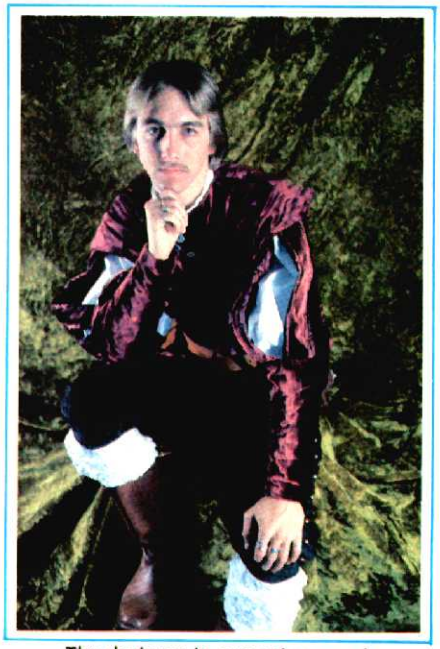
THE SECRET LIFE OF LORD BRITISH

Lord British, who appears in *Ultima III* as the power-giving monarch of the realm, is also the pseudonym of Richard Garriott, designer of all three *Ultima* adventures. With his shy, unassuming manner, wholesome, all-American good looks, and signature red bandanna tied around a blue-jeaned leg, Richard Garriott looks more like a typical college student than like one of the world's greatest software artists.

"I've really grown up doing this," says 22-year-old Richard as he sits in front of the souped-up Apple he uses for game designing. "After all, you're not exactly an adult as a high school freshman."

Richard's interest in gaming extends back to his early high school days, when he and his friends gathered regularly to play non-electronic role-playing games like TSR's "Dungeons and Dragons." After becoming fascinated with the role-playing genre, he started programming his own mini-quests on the school's single, punchcard-operated computer.

His first major programming experience came when his father, space shuttle astronaut Owen Garriott, was sent to California's Stamford University for a year. Richard enrolled in a special computer program at nearby Gunn High School, where he logged in many hours on his Apple. (To this day, he still prefers Apples for his game design.)



The designer in a pensive mood.

Travel by sea and land is necessary to solve Sosaria's mysteries.

Richard picked up his unusual nom-de-plume on his very first day of summer school. When the first people he met said "hi" to him, he replied with "Hello." They said, "What a proper way you have of talking — you must be British!" The nickname stuck, and Richard later used it for many of his role-playing game characters. When he began game-mastering (refereeing games) in his own adventure campaign, he tacked on the title of "Lord."

Back home in Texas, Richard began programming again with new intensity. In 1979 he got a job in a computer store to be able to program on its Apples, and ended up designing the latest of his two dozen-plus text adventures into a more graphics-oriented game. Without his knowledge, his boss showed the game to California Pacific, one of the few computer games companies in a fledgling industry, and Richard Garriott suddenly found himself a professional software artist.

"I was among the first game designers," he recalls. "There were maybe six published authors in the country. Back then, anybody could get published. Now you need a total product: outstanding graphics, audio, play-action, and content."

Once he saw that **Akalebeth** had sold, he set to work on another game, this time intended from the start for the marketplace. The result was *Ultima*. it sold to Sierra On-Line, which also licensed *Ultima II*. The cloth map enclosed with the game was specified in his contract. "I've always had very strong feelings on *exactly* what I want my products to be," he explained.

His need for creative control led to the founding of Origin Systems, a small, friendly company that set up shop in Massachusetts. Robert Garriott, Richard's older brother, handles the business end as president, while Richard and Chuckles (of **Jawbreaker** fame) are the core designers.

Ultima IV: Quest of the Avatar promises to be even more spectacular than its predecessors.

Basic attire for adventurers everywhere.

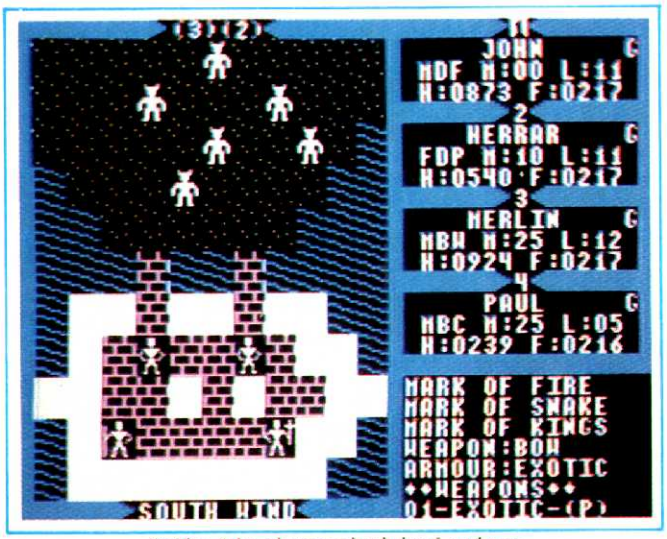
"My parents take an active interest in the company and our careers," says Richard. His mother, an artist, drew the map of Sosaria enclosed with *Ultima III*. "I've warped her into a strange area of art," he laughs. "Instead of landscapes, she's doing drooling gargoyles." Two other Garriotts, eldest brother Randy (a doctor) and sister Linda (a high school student) fill out the supportive clan.

Richard still enjoys non-electronic role-playing games (he recently took part in a 75-person game of "Recon", whose gamemasters included **Wizardry** co-designer Andrew Greenberg) and is an active member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, a nationally-based club in which people take on the roles of fictitious medieval characters.

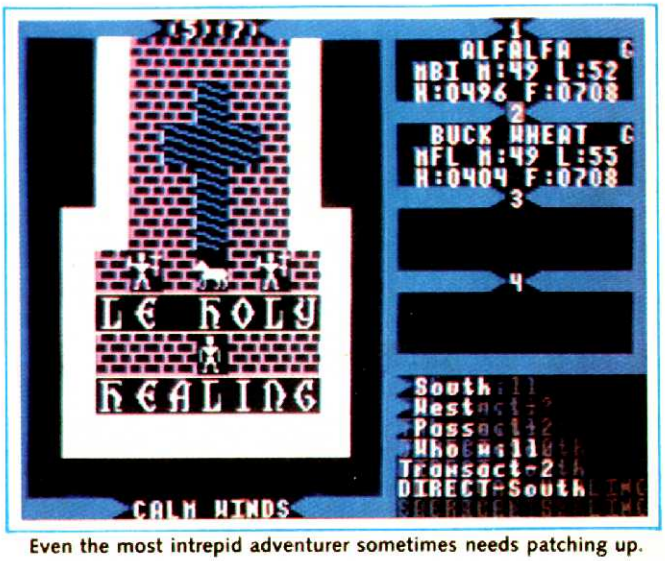
Richard — or should we say, Lord British — is currently working on **Ultima IV: Quest of the Avatar,** which promises to be even more spectacular than his previous works. The game includes real role-playing aspects and is very transaction-oriented. The townsfolk have distinctive personalities, and in the version previewed especially for EG, even duels are possible. *Ultima* fans can look forward to more, and better-animated, monsters who might travel in mixed parties.

"I'm caught in the trap of producing an *Ultima* a year," laments Lord British, who nonetheless was understandably proud of his work-in-progress. He explains that *"Ultima IV* is a game of personal conquest, where the player is trying to better *himself."*

"I have a responsibility as a game designer to make sure a game has a positive influence on people," he continues. "In *Ultima IV* I'm trying to show positive moral traits and values without any religious affiliation. Positive action makes logical sense. That's what I'm trying to say with this game."



Battles take place on both land and sea.



Even the most intrepid adventurer sometimes needs patching up.

For future game designers, Richard Garriott has this advice: "To produce a marketable game is complicated nowadays. You need the educational background and creativity, then you should sit down and talk to someone already in the industry." Is that an offer? "We're looking for people," he replies. "Really good programmers who are creative are a rarity."

EG agrees. Designers of Richard Garriott's caliber are a rare — and special — group indeed.

STAYING ALIVE IN ULTIMA III

No adventure game is easy. But because *Ultima III* has a play-action unique from other adventure games, here are a few tips for keeping your characters alive and well in Sosaria.

Those symbols on the map aren't merely window dressing. Try your hand at deciphering them.

Talk to everybody you meet in towns, and search carefully for those who may be just out of sight. And avoid street brawling. The guards don't take kindly to it.

Search forest areas carefully. Certain places are hidden from view, and these contain special items and information that will come in handy.

Starvation isn't pretty. Always keep a good supply of food on hand.

Clerics — or characters who can use clerical spells — are necessary to a party's survival, since they have the power to heal.

Always map dungeons. Once lost, entire parties often starve to death. Mark the exact locations of traps, gremlins, fountains and red-hot Marks.

Stay a safe distance from poisonous creatures unless you know of a healer nearby, or can cast a Neutralize Poison spell yourself. Missile weapons are a handy investment for fighting these types.

Find and master all the Moon Gates. They come and go at regular intervals, so mark these down when you find one.

When all else fails, get the *Ultima III* clue booklet! It's available direct from Origin Systems, 1545 Osgood Street, Suite #7, North Andover, Ma 01845, for $12.95 plus $1.00 for shipping and handling. Though the pamphlet won't come out and tell you *everything*, it features complete maps of all Sosaria (including locations of creatures and treasures) and offers plenty of helpful advice.

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By THE GAME DOCTOR

Info from the Silicon Surgeon!

There were several questions this time about "Q&A" itself, so I thought I'd spend a little time spouting off on the subject of my favorite column. First off, to answer the question apparently nearest to the hearts of gamers everywhere: yes, Virginia, we *do* read each and every letter sent to us here at the computer clinic. The old Doc couldn't do it alone, of course, so it's time to say 'thanks!' to Angela, the Game Nurse, and the EG editorial staff.

And yes, we *do* edit the letters. Some of our readers ask as many as five or six questions per letter and a few of those queries often duplicate other letters. Space forces us to answer only one or two posers per person. (I'll never forget Tracey Palmer of Saginaw, Michigan, who holds the current Free World title for Most Questions in a Single Letter with, count 'em, *twenty-three!).* Now, on to this month's T-shirt winner and the rest of the questioners. . .

Q: *I have two questions. First, what, exactly, is a computer bulletin board? Second, is there a computer game that simulates "breaking in" to another computer?*

(Scott Van Dalen, Kalamazoo, MI)

A: That's a great idea, Scott, but as of now the Doc doesn't know of any games that use the act of breaking into another computer as part of the play-mechanic. You might be interested in a game upcoming from Trapeze Software, however, tentatively titled **S.E.T.I.** In this one, a gigantic computer receives a message from outer space and then crashes before the missive can be retrieved. Stalwart arcaders must then enter the computer in order to salvage the all-important data.

As for computer bulletin boards, they're just what they sound like. Subscribers to computer services can advertise and keep up on other members of the electronic community with a computerized version of that small town staple, the community bulletin board. Using a modem, the snippets of information are passed throughout the network, with subscribers able to check things out on their monitor or obtain hard copy via the printer.

Q: *What type of computer and computer language is used to program games for home systems such as the Atari 2600, 5200 and Colecovision?*

(Jeff Goldstone, Danville, CA)

A: Most of today's game software is programmed in assembly or machine language on a variety of developmental computer systems.

Q: *Doc, this is the fifth letter that I've wrote to you and I haven't got an answer yet — maybe you can't read my messy writing. I'll take a penmanship course if you could just find it in your heart to answer this question.*

I heard Atari will release a laserdisc module for the 5200 later on this year. Is this true? What games will Atari bring out for it?

(David Young, aka Capt. Baron Von Purple, Penacook, NH)

A: Your handwriting's just fine, Cap, don't worry about a thing. But I should think the chances of Atari releasing a videodisc peripheral for their 5200 are either slim or nonexistent. More likely would be a laserdisc module for their new *7800 Professional System,* which should be available as you read this.

Q: *When EG says a game is designed for the Apple computer or Apple II or even the Apple II+, is there any difference among these systems? Are the disks soft or hard? Is the configuration different? I own an Apple II and I wonder if I can get a plain Apple computer or a II+.*

(Justin Moody, Crawford, NEB)

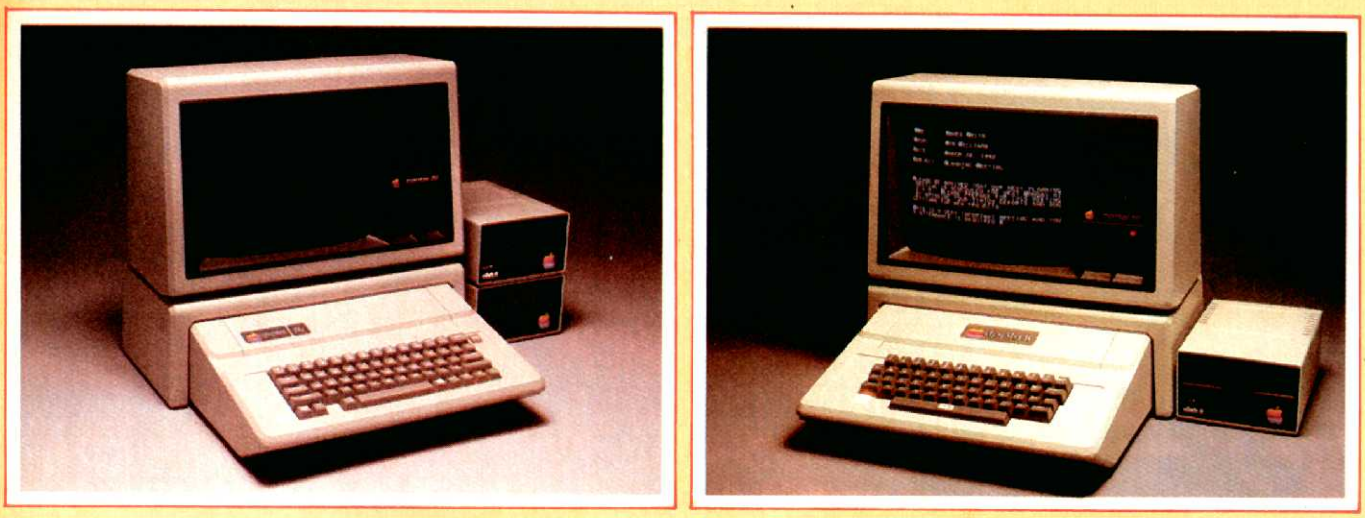
A: Okay, let's try to untangle the roots of our Apple family tree.

The original Apple was a prototype, or "breadboard" computer. There are almost no original Apples in circulation today, as most of the original run failed to pass muster on the Government's emission standards. The Apple II was, in actuality, the first mass-market Apple computer. It used Integer BASIC, while the II+, built sometime later, employed the more popular Microsoft-to-Apple (or Applesoft) BASIC. In other words, an Apple II with a language board containing Applesoft *is* an Apple II+.

Today, however, since so little of the software is written in anything but machine language, the lack of Applesoft may never become a problem.

Though you didn't ask about them specifically, Justin, I might as well include the IIe and IIc in this little rundown. The Apple IIe is compatible with the II and II+, but possesses 64K memory, or 16K more than its older cousins.

The Apple IIc is more of a business computer. It carries 128K of memory,



Part of Apple's extended family: the Apple IIe (left) and the Apple II.

weighs seven-and-a-half pounds and features a built-in disk drive (floppy, as with all Apple computers). It is also different in that there are no internal slots for memory boards, as there are on the rest of the line. The IIc, in fact, is not intended to be opened at all. Witness the plugs running along the back of the system for external hook-up of such boards.

Q&A QUICKIES: H. Martin Swan of St. Paul, MN, points out that while the 5200's VCS module doesn't work on the older 5200 systems, Atari *will* make the needed modifications free of cost. He also wonders about the lines and general hash he's getting on his 5200 games. No, H. Martin, I doubt your system is malfunctioning. One of the real problems faced by 5200 owners (and Colecovisionaries as well) is a very high level of RF (radio frequency) interference. . . William Schwendinger wonders if the "SSI" who published **Cosmic Balance I** and **II** is, actually, Strategic Simulations, Inc. You got it, Bill. . . Finally, Coleco has folded its "Experience" magazine — sorry, Colecovisionaries. . .

The clock on the wall says we're all out of time for this installment of Q&A, but we'll be back next issue so keep those cards and letters coming in. The address, in case it has slipped your mind, is ELECTRONIC GAMES, 460 W. 34th Street, New York, NY 10001. The Game Doctor is on 24-hour "call" for electronic diagnosis!

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Compiled by the editors of video the #1 magazine of home video.

By JOYCE WORLEY

These Three Classics Have Shrunk to Palm-Size, But There's Still Room On Screen For Plenty Of Fun.

MINER 2049ER

Tiger/$24.95

Miner 2049er, Bill Hogue's climbing and jumping game, is a phenomenon with versions for virtually every home videogame and computer system. The design won the Arcade Award as 1984 Electronic Game Of The Year.

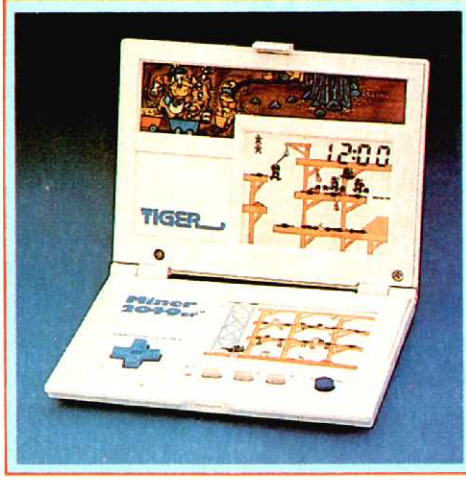
Now the little prospector hunts in the palm of your hand, in a two-screen compact-style mini-arcade. Admittedly, the mine looks different now. The girders and cross supports form a yellow, orange, red and green backdrop to the LCD screen. Bounty Bob, the uranium chunks, monsters and prizes are inky drawings against the mining scene.

Bounty Bob starts in the lower right-hand corner of the lower 1½- by 2-inch LCD screen. The character has to work his way up the mine shaft, gathering all the uranium on each floor. When he has completed the first level, Bob advances to the upper screen filled with more obstacles and puzzles.

Guard monsters on each level must be avoided by jumping over them, or destroyed in the burst of power the miner gets after finding a prize. To reach upper floors, Bounty Bob has to stuff himself into the cannon and get shot upward. The amount of TNT used determines which floor he'll reach.

Slides, an automatic carrier, the teleportation box and a swinging rope keep Bob moving through the mines — with a little help from the arcader.

The play-mechanic involved with each of Bob's tasks is simple, but they combine to form a fairly difficult contest. The spirit that made this a great game on computer is still intact. *Miner 2049er* is not an easy game to master, but it is one of the finest handheld amusements.



MINER 2049ER: HOW IT PLAYS

All the action is controlled by a four-directional switch and a jump/fire button. Use the direction switch to move Bob along the floor of the mine left or right. Move him upward to grab prizes or TNT from the ceiling. The jump button makes Bob leap into the cannon, then fires him to upper floors. It also moves him into the teleportation chamber and to the swinging rope, and hops Bob over the roving guard monsters.

The game also functions as an LCD digital clock.

PINBALL

Nintendo/$34.99

Pinball has always been a favorite of arcade aces. This year, the game is experiencing a vogue among mini-game fans as well. Last month we looked at Gakken's palm-sized player. Now Nintendo has unveiled a dual-screen, compact-style midget.

Dual LCD screens are housed in a hip-pocket-size black and gold compact. The balls move freely between the 1½- by 2-inch screens as they careen off bumpers, thumpers, flippers and kickers.

There are two versions of the game.

POCKETSIZE PINBALL (NINTENDO)

The first is a three-ball contest, with no bonuses. The more difficult choice starts with one ball, then gives up to three bonus balls to high-scorers.

The unit has the prettiest pinball field ever designed for a mini-game. It's not easy to get a satisfactory arcade feel to these midget machines. All the moving parts on the LCD screens are rendered in black, so artists created contrast by using attractive backdrops to the action. Nintendo's masters of miniatures formed the field with colorful designs. Bumpers, thumpers and other features are painted onto a sheet of glass that lies on top of the painted background. The illusion created by this layering of designs is satisfactorily three-dimensional.

But the play's the thing and this mini-marvel has plenty of action. The ball flies over the field, propelled by thumpers and kickers, racking up points to a maximum of 999,900, accompanied by bells, beeps and musical tones.

Pinball definitely ranks as a highly attractive pocket amusement.

PINBALL: HOW IT PLAYS

Choose Game A or B, then use the right control to release the ball from the chute in the lower right-hand corner. The longer the button is depressed, the faster the ball flies out of the slot. Four flippers, two on each side, keep the action going, controlled by comfortable thumb buttons that flank the chassis. The upper and lower flippers operate simultaneously.

This battery-operated game machine also functions as a clock and alarm.

REVERSI MASTER

Video Technology/$39.95

Reversi is exceptionally well-suited to the mini-arcade format. The electronics take over the chore of flipping the two-sided disks, while the mini-brain provides a strong opponent at two skill levels for solitaire play.

Reversi is a very simple game to learn. Play starts with four pieces in the center of the board. Players capture opposing pieces by flanking them. Capturing an enemy piece changes its color, and the winner of the game is the one with the most pieces on the board in his/her color. But pieces change back and forth throughout the game as new disks are positioned in this classic strategy contest.

Play continues until every square on the board is full, or until one color is entirely eliminated.

Reversi Master features an 8 by 8 grid, and players enter the coordinates of their moves by pressing alphanumeric keys. The piece flashes in that position, then is registered with the enter button. If the piece doesn't flash in position, it means those coordinates aren't a legal move. In that case, or if the gamer changes his or her mind after entering the coordinates, just punch in new ones; the computer will accept the corrected directions.

The computer keeps an running tally of how many pieces each color has on the board, then counts the pieces at the end of the game to see who is the final winner.

There are two skill levels, plus a manual setting for two humans to play against each other. At the lowest level, the computer offers a solid opponent, but at level two, the competition gets a lot tougher.

Reversi Master has a deceptively simple appearance. The grey-blue housing is enhanced by a high-tech steel control panel with sturdy red and blue buttons. The grid on the LCD screen is attractively ruled in blue-green, and the electronic pieces are black and white disks. Although not too dramatic looking, the strength of Reversi Master really lies in its brains. The strategy program provides good competition and a pleasant gaming experience.

REVERSI MASTER: HOW IT PLAYS

Choose level 1, 2, or manual (for head-to-head human competition), and press Enter to start a new game. The arcader plays the black pieces unless he wants the computer to go first; in that case, press the Pass button and the computer begins the game using the black pieces. To register the coordinates of each move, push the letter first, then the number, and push the Enter button. Play is accompanied by various sound effects, but pushing any alphanumeric key before the game starts puts the game into silent mode.

REVERSI MASTER (VIDEO TECHNOLOGY)

Interaction between the readers and editors of **Electronic Games** helps make this a better magazine. The more we here at **EG** know about who you are and what you want to read, the better we can satisfy your needs and desires. That's why we run a Reader Poll in every single issue of this magazine. Rest assured that even though we protect the anonymity of every respondent to our survey, the editor personally reads each and every ballot received. And of course, this is also your ballot for casting your vote for the most popular videogames, computer game programs and coin-op arcade machines.

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Apple II		
Commodore 64		
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Coming Attractions

PLAYERS GUIDE TO PROGRAMMABLE VIDEOGAME SYSTEMS

Computers may grab most of the gaming headlines, but videogames are far from finished. This special section analyzes all currently available machines, investigates possible bargains in defunct systems and tackles the tough question of whether it's worth buying a programmable videogame unit at all.

GAME OF THE MONTH: BRUCE LEE

In November, our newest regular feature salutes **Bruce Lee,** DataSoft's thrilling action-strategy computer game of martial arts combat. You'll get an in-depth review, a behind-the-scenes look at how the game was designed and even some hints on how to guide your on-screen hero to ultimate victory!

TOUCHDOWN!

Cheerleaders are dusting off their pom poms, athletes are exercising away those summer spare tires and pigskins are filling the air. It's football time and, as long-time readers know, that means it's also time for EG's annual review of electronic football scene. If you enjoy gridiron action on the home gaming screen, this comprehensive survey is guaranteed to light up the scoreboard.

THE GREAT GAME DESIGNER HUNT

How do software publishers find, lure and keep the top game-creators? Everyone in the electronic gaming business has a pet theory, but do all of them work equally well? This is the never-before-told story of what happens when corporations collide in a struggle for design talent.

There'll be plenty of other exciting articles and features of interest to arcaders, plus these regular columns:

- ★ Passport to Adventure
- ★ Q&A
- ★ Inside Gaming
- ★ Arcade America
- ★ Software Showcase
- ★ Programmable Parade
- ★ Switch On!
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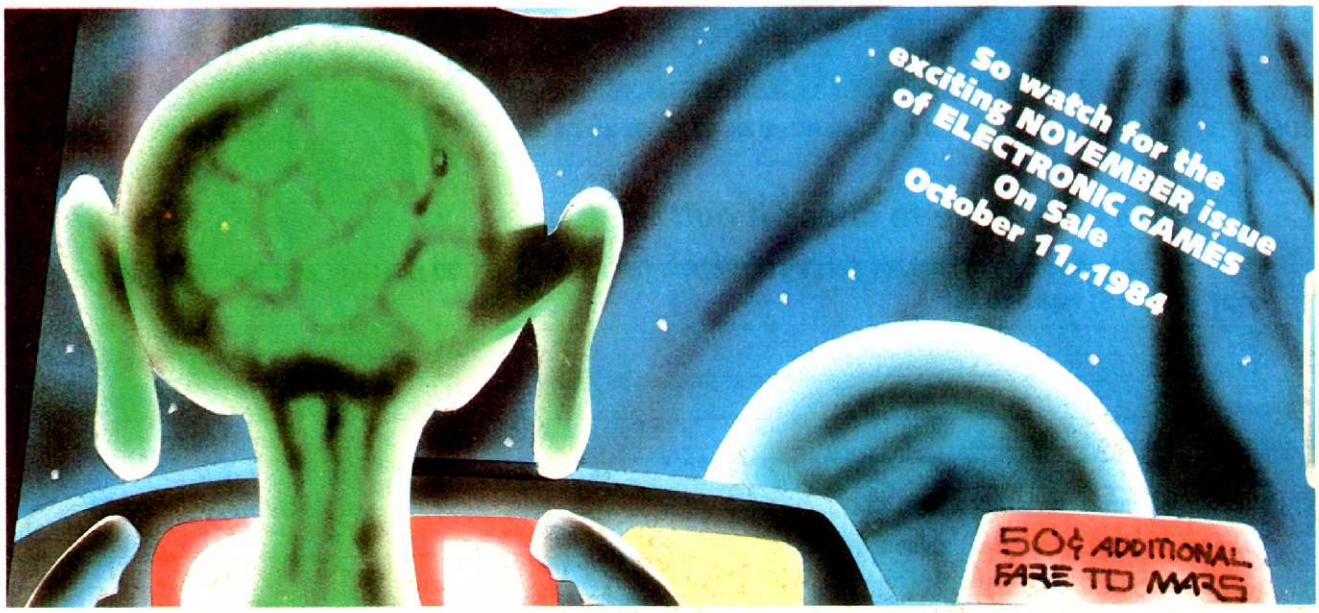

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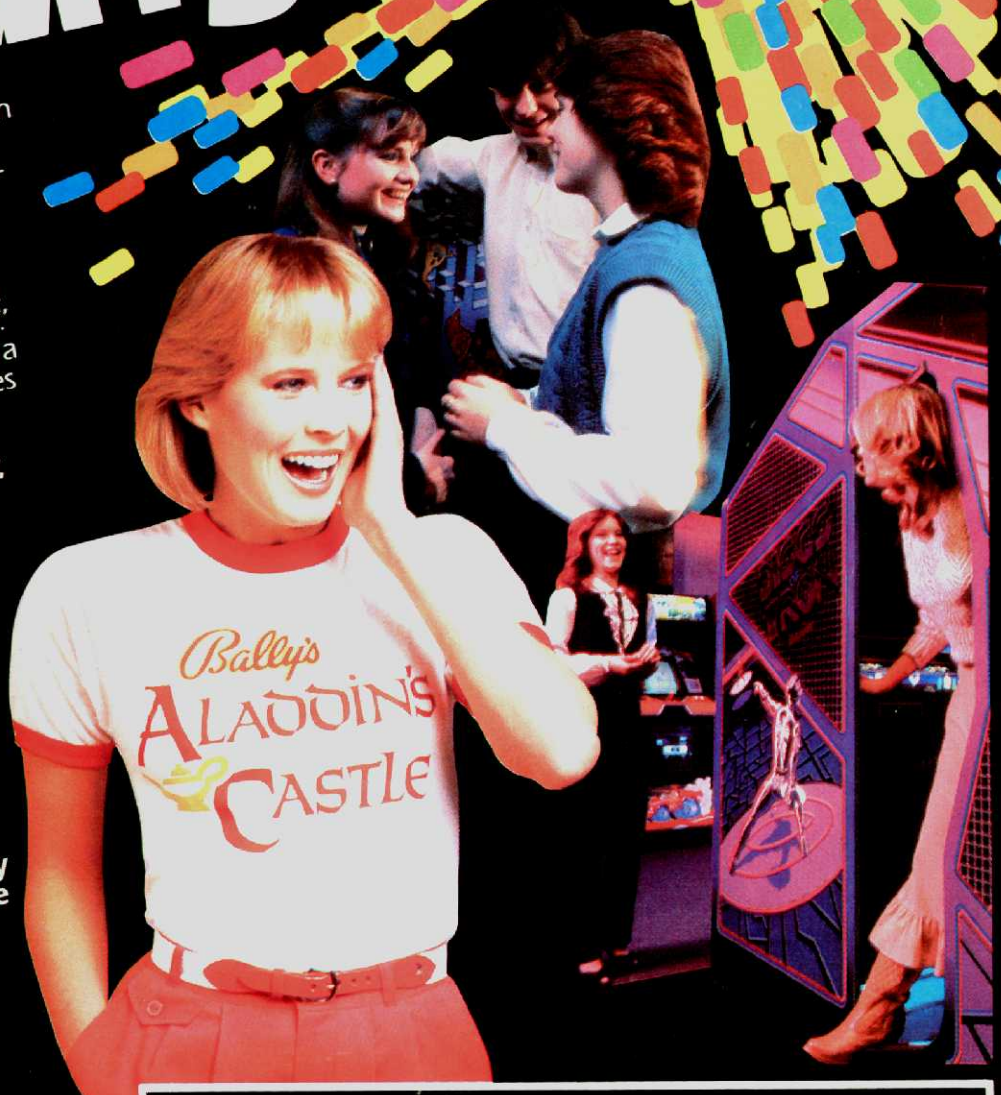

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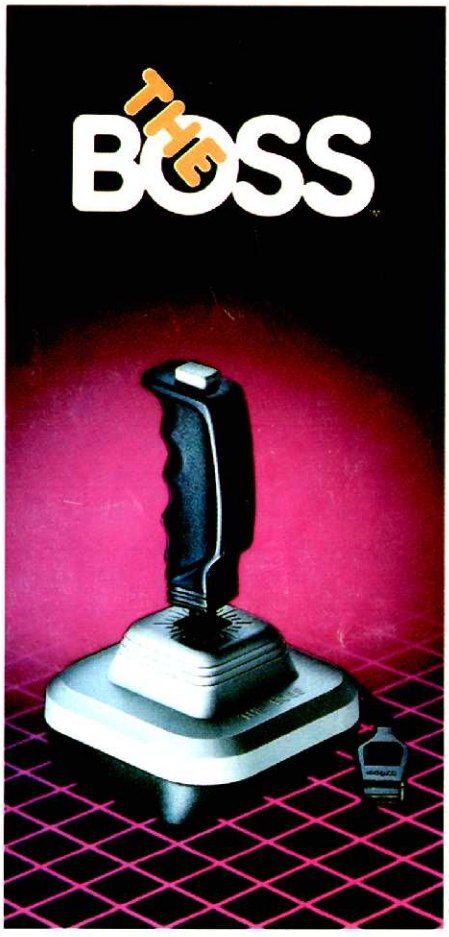

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